

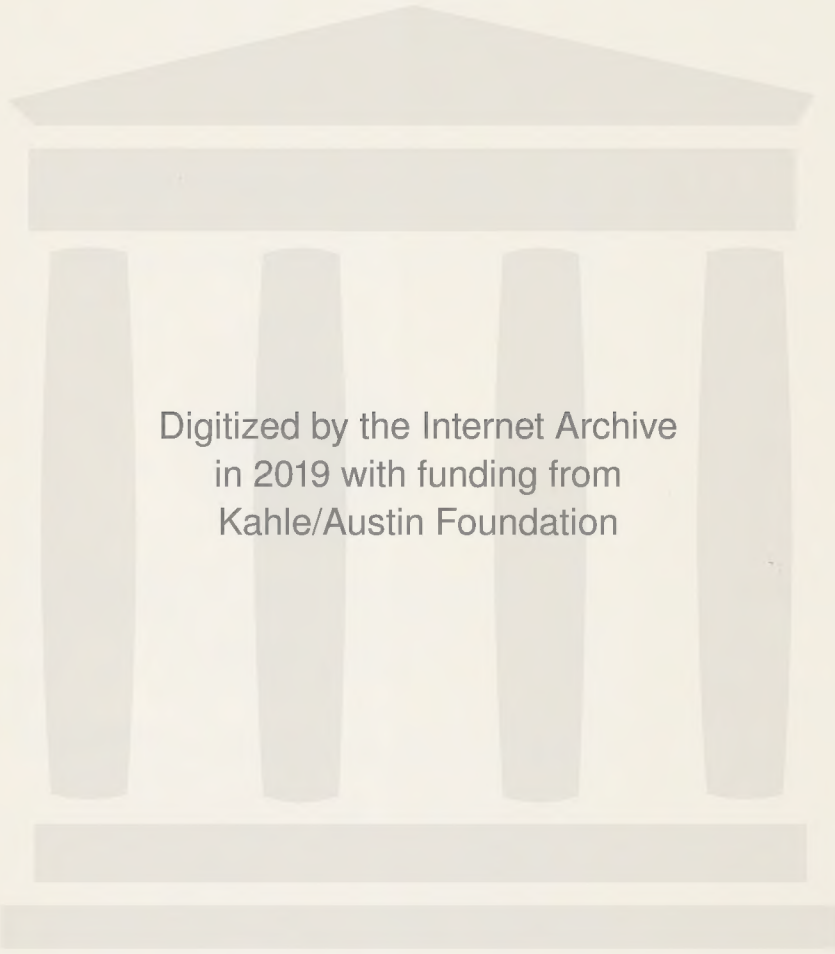


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THE ARMIES  
OF THE  
FIRST FRENCH REPUBLIC

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THE ARMIES  
OF THE  
FIRST FRENCH REPUBLIC  
AND THE RISE OF THE MARSHALS  
OF NAPOLEON I

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THE ARMIES IN THE WEST  
1793 TO 1797, AND  
THE ARMIES IN THE SOUTH  
1792 TO MARCH 1796

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By the late  
COLONEL RAMSAY WESTON PHIPPS  
formerly of the Royal Artillery

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ONULP



## PREFACE

THE reviews of the first two volumes of the *Armies of the First French Republic*<sup>1</sup> have been very favourable, and it is obvious that the value of my father's work has been held to outweigh the lack of skill of the editing. For this I am very grateful.

From the reviewers I get two general opinions: one, that it would be best to sketch lightly the less-known armies and to give fully those that are famous, such as Bonaparte's; and the other, that more of interest will be brought to light by examining the history of an obscure army than by re-telling the story of the classic campaigns. But I have no choice. The course to be pursued was clearly marked out by my father. He limited himself to a study of these armies as the 'Schools of the Marshals' and consequently to him the importance of a campaign varied with the number of future Marshals to whose education it may be said to have contributed. Thus in the present volume the chapters on La Vendée obviously do not pretend to form a history of that war, but are merely a sketch that may throw light on Grouchy's character as influenced by the men under whom he then served. On the other hand, the army of the Eastern Pyrenees, with its five future Marshals, receives a good deal of attention. All through my father's long work he withdraws cautiously from discussing theories of strategy and turns to the human attributes of his loved Marshals.

On the other hand, it has seemed to me that, in order to secure a greater measure of correct chronological sequence in a volume dealing with a number of simultaneous campaigns, some departure from my father's system might be justified. As he says in his Introduction to the first volume, his plan of giving the history of each army in turn enables him to keep separate the various groups of Marshals—groups whose action

<sup>1</sup> Vol. I. *The Armée du Nord* (1926). Vol. II. *The Armées de la Moselle, du Rhin, de Sambre-et-Meuse, de Rhin-et-Moselle* (1929).

often had no effect on each other. Here, however, we have two sister armies, 'Alpes' and 'Italie', whose careers are interwoven; and we have the first year of 'Italie's' existence affecting decisively the war in the Pyrenees, for it was the commander and troops set free by the taking of Toulon that carried the army of the Eastern Pyrenees into Spain. I have therefore taken on myself to combine my father's histories of the army of the Alps and the army of Italy, and to divide this combined history into two portions, between which I have inserted his account of the armies of the Pyrenees. The general effect of this arrangement is that such men as Dugommier, Augereau, Victor, Masséna, Lannes, and Bonaparte himself, leave these pages with scarcely a stain on their chronology, and that the proper relation between the events in Italy and those in Spain is preserved.

This is not so with some of the characters that appear in La Vendée. Hoche and Marceau, who were honourably buried in volume ii, now return with Kléber, who has forfeited several years' service. But to what control, military or literary, would such unquiet spirits submit?

For the rest, it is inevitable that expressions such as 'In the meantime . . .', 'I must now return to . . .' should recur: even, I see, the great writers of military history have to employ them, nor can the poet's eye take in the whole battlefield. So, on Flodden field,

Far on the left, unseen *the while*,  
Stanley broke Lennox and Argyle.

The present volume ends in March 1796, when Bonaparte is taking command of the army of Italy. Any other arrangement, even that of omitting La Vendée, would have meant a volume of inordinate length or a complete upset of chronology. And I am anxious that, in publishing, as I hope, the next volume, I should have space for my father's account of the *coup d'état* of Fructidor 1797, which follows closely on the history of Bonaparte's army of Italy and is of great importance for the subject.



It has struck me, and it will probably strike the reader, that in this, as in the two preceding volumes, my father has devoted much space to repeated denunciations of the folly of the Representatives with the armies. He may seem to be flogging a dead horse. But I know well that the chastisement of civilian incompetence in military affairs was to him a labour of love, and I cannot bring myself to abate in however small a degree the expression of his just resentment.

I suppose that in every work of this sort maps must be the great difficulty. Modern maps are accurate, but they do not always represent the country as it was at the period of the history: old roads have disappeared and new ones appeared, towns have grown, canals been made, and the extent of wooded and marshy ground has varied. Eighteenth- or early nineteenth-century maps may have such features fairly correct, but they are not accurate as to distances or the configuration of hills. To adapt a modern map to the period of the book is the obvious solution, but is the result satisfactory? All that an amateur like myself can do is to try to make his maps clear, to avoid detail as far as possible, and to show all the places mentioned in the text. There is no limit to the number of maps which a book like this, dealing with the Alps and the Pyrenees, might usefully contain, and mountains are nowadays most accurately and beautifully mapped. But, if I may dare to ask, is it not sometimes easier to grasp the reason and significance of some march or some position from Jomini's simple caterpillars than from the elaborately contoured modern maps? Where two of Jomini's caterpillars approach their noses to each other but do not touch, there obviously is a pass through the hills, and no calculation of relative heights is necessary. Standing some few months ago by the ancient castle of Dego and gazing down on Bonaparte's Way, I rebelled against maps and wondered whether there will ever be invented some quite inaccurate but convincing system of delineating historic ground in such a way that the proportional importance of features may prevail over the stern outline of nature.

As to the names of mountains, rivers, and towns, I have tried

to spell these in the modern French, Italian, or Spanish manner, according to the side of the frontier on which they lie.

In this volume I have, in order to save much time, omitted the references to authorities on each page, except where they seem to be essential. At the beginning of the book is a list of the works consulted by my father throughout, and at the beginning of the history of each set of armies are the names of those that apply to those armies in particular.

In the last three chapters we enter a period on which the late General Colin is an acknowledged authority. My father has not included Colin's works in his lists, but some of the more important of them were in his library (now the 'Phipps Bequest' in the Codrington Library at All Souls, Oxford), and are shown in the catalogue of his books, which I have. It will be seen that, as regards Bonaparte's share in the plans for the invasion of Italy, my father's conclusions do not differ from those of General Colin and of Mr. Spenser Wilkinson.<sup>1</sup> In this case, as in all others, I have given in the Lists of Authorities only those works quoted by my father.

The next volume will, I hope, contain the history of Bonaparte's Armée d'Italie, 1796-7, and that of the *coup d'état* of Fructidor, 1797.

CHARLES F. PHIPPS,  
Colonel, late R.A.

<sup>1</sup> See Colin, *Études sur la campagne de 1796-7 en Italie*, Paris, 1898; *L'Éducation Militaire de Napoléon*, Paris, 1901.

Spenser Wilkinson, *The Rise of General Bonaparte*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1930.



## NOTE

COLONEL C. F. Phipps, the Editor of his father's work, died on 9 June 1931, when the present volume was in the press. He had corrected the proofs of the first half of the volume, prepared sketches for the maps, and written the Preface printed above. The Publishers are indebted to Mr. C. T. Atkinson of Exeter College for reading through the whole of the proofs, and for scrutinizing the draftsman's finished drawings for the maps, prepared from Colonel Phipps's sketches.

In the Prefaces to Volumes I and II there will be found some account of the extent and scope of the manuscript materials left by Colonel Ramsay Weston Phipps. His son hoped to continue the publication of the work, as the last words of his Preface to the present volume show. We are not without hope that means may be found to continue the series.



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# I

## L'ARMÉE DES CÔTES DE CHERBOURG AND L'ARMÉE DES CÔTES DE LA ROCHELLE

(April to July 1793)

Nature of the struggle in the West. The Republican reinforcements.  
Berthier amid the confusion.

### CONTEMPORARY EVENTS

- 1793 9th March. War with Spain declared.  
22nd March. War with the Empire declared.  
6th April. Comité de Salut public established.  
May. Spanish armies enter France.  
29th May. Revolt of Lyons.  
31st May. Fall of the Girondins.

It would be pleasant to avoid all mention of the insurrection in the west of France, the confused slaughter that is called the war of La Vendée. It is, however, impossible to ignore it, not only because some of the men in whom we are interested were engaged in this district, but also because the struggle on the sea-coast affected the armies facing the enemy on the land frontiers. There men heard behind them the crash of an angry sea, ever threatening to break in, and saw their ranks weakened to meet the needs of those that had to stem the seething tide. How important was this war in the West, and how it drained France, is shown by the fact that in October 1794 Canclaux, a most sane General, in command of the main force in the West, estimated the nominal strength of the three armies there as 136,000, out of which, after providing for the necessary garrisons, some 50,000 men could be employed as an active and movable force. Now, about the same time, the two great armies that were conquering Holland and advancing to the Rhine had roughly the following strength: Pichegru's Armée du Nord some 67,000, and Jourdan's Armée de Sambre-et-Meuse 111,350. Again, when Hoche, commanding the whole force in the West, achieved the pacification of 1796, his strength was about 117,146; and, although a considerable number of men had to be retained in the district, he was able to send some 44,662 to the frontiers. Even in 1815, when Napoleon was throwing for



the last stake of the Empire and of France at Waterloo, the Royalists boasted that they had retained 25,000 of his men by their renewed insurrection in this district, and they certainly had kept at least 17,000 or 18,000.<sup>1</sup>

The rising in the west of France was caused mainly by two measures of the Convention—the attempt to carry out the levy of 300,000 men for the armies, and the foolish and useless war begun by the Republic against those priests who considered the new constitution impossible and refused to take the oath to it. Now the people loved their homes and were much influenced by their priests. Angry at seeing their young men about to be sent away, and excited by the priests, who preached a Holy War, the people rose; leaders were furnished by what we should call the country gentry; and soon the whole of the West was in a blaze. Nor was armed resistance to the Convention confined to this part of France: throughout the whole country the Royalist party was stronger than is generally realized, and two of the great cities, Toulon and Lyons, were reduced by regular sieges, while, until Bonaparte seized power, a very large proportion of the troops of the Republic had to be kept in the interior in order to ensure the maintenance of the rule of ‘Freedom’. The West, then, had the great advantage of retaining its young men, who, instead of fighting for the Republic on the frontiers, served against it. A great part of the western country offered an admirable field for the insurrection, for it was covered by woods and intersected by thick hedges and deep ditches, while the narrow, winding lanes were perplexing to strangers. At any rate at first, the Vendéans fought in three bodies. The front line was composed of game-keepers, smugglers, and poachers, armed mostly with pistols and with the double-barrelled muskets with which they could shoot so well. These men were spread out as skirmishers, some along the front, but chiefly on the flanks, of the ‘Bleus’ or Republicans, and, moving rapidly behind hedges, they would try to outflank their foes. I presume that many of such men had served in the former militia, so that here the Republic was opposed by the very class of man that formed so good an element in the first armies raised by the Government. Behind the front

<sup>1</sup> Thiers, *Consulat et Empire*, xx. 7. But Lamarque, who commanded there, gives himself an active force of only 6,577; see Lamarque, i. 189 and ii. 36.

line came the best-armed of the peasants, brave men who charged when the front line had done its work. In rear was the remainder of the host, ill-armed, and often accompanied by a number of priests and women.<sup>1</sup> Whether the 'Bleus' stood in some selected position, or advanced in the narrow roads along which they could only move three abreast, a line of fire suddenly swept round their flanks, and often appeared in their rear, while blood-curdling yells, ringing from every quarter, told on the nerves of the soldiers, who, as Kléber said, had always one eye in their back. Then the attack was suddenly delivered, and the Vendéans fought bravely, even against the most seasoned troops. If the 'Bleus' gave way, the mass of peasants poured on them, dashing rapidly forward, and pursuing far, whilst the troops, confused in the lanes, were as apt as not to take a direction leading them away from their base. Were the Vendéans beaten, they soon disappeared, for the heavily burdened troops could not keep pace with the peasant, who at most carried a gun and a few cartridges. At first, after such victories, the Republicans, finding nothing in front of them but a few peaceful cultivators, reported to Paris that the war was over, only to find some post suddenly overwhelmed. Towards the end of the struggle, Hoche, fighting in rather a different country, complained that defeat made little difference to his opponent, Charrette, for that leader's force, breaking up for the moment, would reappear in rear of the victors, cutting off their supplies and often forcing the lately triumphant troops to retreat tails down. At all times the scouts of the insurgents infested the roads, whilst the 'Bleus' seldom knew anything of their enemies until struck by them.

As for supplies, these the Republicans gradually furnished: 'At the beginning,' wrote Boulard, an experienced officer, 'these same men were without cannons, without arms, and without cavalry: our defeats have furnished them with everything; and, yet more, with audacity.'<sup>2</sup> The rout of columns, or the capture of convoys, supplied most of the wants of the Vendéans, who in time took four hundred guns, apparently on the left bank of the

<sup>1</sup> For their marks of military rank in Brittany, see Jung, *Dubois-Crancé*, ii, plate at p. 95.

<sup>2</sup> The Chouans, on the right bank of the Loire, declared they could always buy ammunition from the troops: Chassin, *Pac.*, i. 187.

Loire alone. Still their artillery, according to Savary, was bad, and their cavalry of little use in the field, except for the pursuit of beaten troops. But it did good service in scouring the country for information. A weak point was that the men, like the Highlanders, had a habit of returning to their homes frequently, but this had a good side, for, retaining a nucleus round them, their leaders could let the mass go away to rest and supply themselves with food, whilst the tocsin soon rallied them again when required. Knowing every field and ditch, they could move in a way impossible to the 'Bleus'.

The Republic was at a loss how to meet this rising, the avowed object of which was to restore the Monarchy to its full powers. To men intoxicated with their own orations in praise of the Liberty they professed to have won, it was a shock to find a whole population, containing few people that could be called aristocrats, determined to fight for a régime believed to be past for ever; and at first astonishment and then indignation overcame the Convention at the mere mention of the 'inexplicable La Vendée', as they styled it. Its very name had to be changed into 'Département Vengé', and, as the struggle grew fiercer, nothing was too bad, not even extermination, for the erring West. The Convention had the sympathy of part of the population of the district, chiefly that of the large towns (whose share in the struggle is recounted at length by M. Chassin) besides that of the Protestants, who were pleased with the persecution of the priests; but the pressure on the land-frontiers was severe and scarcely any regular troops were available for the West. Two infantry and two cavalry regiments alone are mentioned, and of these one cavalry regiment seems to have been just forming, while 300 men of one of the infantry regiments deserted to the insurgents. Bordeaux furnished some good battalions of volunteers, but these soon insisted on returning home. The local levies of the districts were raw battalions, many of them for long unarmed, and not animated by the spirit which made the insurgents so difficult to deal with. It was all very well to swear again and again to 'Vivre libre ou mourir', but a patriot gained so little by dying, whilst the Vendean braved death for his God and his King, in full faith that, if he fell on the field, he won Paradise. The local levies were apt to turn at the mere sight of the enemy, threaten-



ing any officers who attempted to stop them, and the cry of the Generals was for regulars. It required good troops to face a foe who tracked you with all the skill and secrecy of a Red Indian, and then charged home with the fury of a Highlander and the zeal of an Ironside. Even when the Republic got trained troops the struggle continued until it became so onerous to the local patriots that their complaints did much to lead to a pacification, rather than a suppression, of the district.

Several armies existed at one time in the West, but they acted so much together, and made so many transfers of troops from one to the other, that they never had the distinct existences and interests that separated, for instance, the different armies on the Rhine. It was only gradually that the Government awoke to the seriousness of the struggle here. On the 1st October 1792 a special command of a *Division sur les Côtes* was ordered and was to be under Félix Wimpfen. On the 1st March 1793 an *Armée des Côtes de la Manche* was decreed, whose district was to be from the mouth of the Gironde northwards along the coast to the mouth of the Somme, and, with little alteration, this continued to be the district with whose history we are concerned. Labourdonnaie, whom we have seen commanding the *Armée du Nord* under Dumouriez, and who had then gone to command a shadowy *Armée de l'Intérieur* at Châlons, was given this new force, but he turned his attention to the northern coast. In the same month, March, came the news of the insurrection, and three army corps were decreed for this region; they consisted altogether of thirty-four battalions of volunteers with only two regiments of the regular infantry and two of cavalry. Twenty-four more battalions of volunteers were to have come from the Rhine Departments, but the disasters to the 'Nord' stopped the march of these troops. Labourdonnaie at Rennes was to command two of these corps on the right bank of the Loire, while Berruyer, who had succeeded him in command of the *Armée de l'Intérieur*, was to command on the left bank of that river, but under Labourdonnaie. Before these commanders could do much, they were called to Paris to account for themselves. Labourdonnaie, justifying himself, was sent in July 1793 to command the *Armée des Pyrénées Occidentales*, where he soon died. With their removal ended the first stage of the organization in La

Vendée. Next came two decrees which I may call tentative, the first of the 8th April 1793, by which the command of the troops on the sea-coasts from the right bank of the Loire to the Somme was given to General Canclaux, and that from the left bank of the Loire to the Garonne to General Biron, then commanding the *Armée d'Italie*. Then on the 25th April the '*Armée des Côtes Maritimes* (which, I presume, we may take as the *Armée des Côtes de la Manche*) was partitioned into three divisions or armies, to be commanded in chief by Biron, who was also to command in person the *Armée des Côtes de l'Ouest* from the Loire to Saint-Malo inclusive; Canclaux to be the General of the *Armée des Côtes de La Manche*, from Saint-Malo to the Authie. Here, it will be seen, was much confusion of nomenclature, but the great decree of the 30th April cleared all this away and put the organization in the West on a permanent basis. That decree formed eleven armies to encircle France, and three of these were to fill the space between the right of the '*Pyrénées Occidentales*', and the left of the '*Nord*'. The *Armée des Côtes de La Rochelle* extended from the mouth of the Gironde to that of the Loire. The *Armée des Côtes de Brest* extended from the mouth of the Loire to Saint-Malo inclusive; while the *Armée des Côtes de Cherbourg* extended from Saint-Malo exclusive to the Authie, the next river east of the Somme. These armies I shall call by their short titles, '*Rochelle*', '*Brest*', and '*Cherbourg*'. Roughly speaking, of the former maritime provinces, Rochelle had Saintonge and Poitou; Brest had Brittany; and Cherbourg, Normandy.

It is unnecessary for us to follow all the fortunes of the three armies, '*Rochelle*', '*Brest*', and '*Cherbourg*', for practically they can be considered as one force. The most northerly of them, '*Cherbourg*', had the least importance, and was generally drained of men to reinforce the others, but it nearly had the most stirring career of all three. On the 1st March 1793 General of Brigade Grouchy was employed in this district, first at Rennes, and then at Havre, watching the coast against any attack by the English. In May 1793, when '*Cherbourg*' was being organized, its commander, Félix Wimpfen, applied to have Grouchy posted to his army, apparently to command his cavalry, declaring that Grouchy could be trusted, because, although an ex-noble, he had '*violemment et brillamment*'



burnt his ships from the beginning of the Revolution. Fortunately for Grouchy, Wimpfen's application for him was unsuccessful, and on the 15th May he was posted to 'Brest', under Canclaux, while Wimpfen proceeded to burn his own ships with a vengeance. On the 31st May the struggle in the Convention between the 'Montagne' and the Girondins ended in the armed revolt of the Commune of Paris, which forced the Convention to eject the Girondins. A cry at once rose from many Departments that the Convention was no longer free, and preparations were made in many quarters for a march on Paris. It was not in La Vendée that the civil war began. Normandy, supported by the Bretons, began to raise troops. Wimpfen espoused their cause, and, had his army been properly organized, the course of the Revolution might have been altered. The Convention called him to Paris, but he replied that he would come with 60,000 men. In reality only a few raw levies could be got together for the 'armée départementale', but with these he announced he would march, not *on*, but *towards* Paris. The Convention also was at a loss for men, but they collected what troops or armed men they could, and another future Marshal, Brune, now came on the scene. General Sepher was to command the force from Paris, and Brune was Chief of the Staff. On the 13th June Puisaye, Wimpfen's lieutenant, advanced with 1,000 men and 10 guns from Évreux on Vernon, and at Pacy-sur-Eure he met the leading troops of the Convention under Colonel Imbert of the 19th Regiment. Imbert's men stood five shots from Puisaye's guns, and then with their two pieces fired thirty or forty rounds and ran for Vernon, leaving their food behind them. Puisaye's men advanced, but in their turn became panic-stricken, mainly from the bad behaviour of two cavalry corps, and ran, so that, as one admiring officer remarked, the two forces would have had to encircle the globe in order to meet. Not a musket shot was fired in this extraordinary affair. The troops of the Convention stopped first, but when they entered Pacy next day they were driven back. • Puisaye, however, insisted on retreating and soon gave up the attempt: his force dispersed, or joined the troops of the Con-

<sup>1</sup> Général Charles Sepher had been four years a Dragoon under the *ancien régime*, and had risen as head of a volunteer battalion: Chassin, *Vendée Patriote*, iii. 316, note 2. He is the Sherer of Puisaye, ii. 134, who mistakes him for Schérer.

vention. The two fights cost the troops of the Convention one man, and they said they had killed eight of Puisaye's force. Some reports even deny any loss on either side, and the Representative Lindet declared that this war should cost neither tears nor sighs. What tears and bloodshed would have been saved if the Convention had been defeated!<sup>1</sup>

This farcical affair decided the contest. Wimpfen, who had defended Thionville bravely enough against the Allies in 1792, felt his weakness, and differed from the party of resistance, the Federalists, who would not seek the help of England. However, with wonderful celerity, the Federalists found that, though the Convention might be wrong, still it had decreed a Constitution. Why, then, fight when the Nation was about to vote its wishes? Doubtless also the odium of opposing the government at a time when the advance of the Allies had to be checked, and especially when the danger from the Royalist party in the West was growing, told in favour of the Convention, so that all resistance stopped and the Convention was left master of the situation. Brune remained some time in the district, and in a few days was presiding at the destruction of the house of Buzot, one of the Girondin Representatives. In time he returned to Paris, where, it is said, he urged his own appointment to the Ministry for War on account of his services in this campaign, until his friend Danton dissuaded him from making the absurd claim.

To us the most important of the armies in the West is not 'Cherbourg' but the southern force, the Armée de la Rochelle, soon to become the Armée de l'Ouest. Here we find General of Brigade Berthier, who, it will be remembered, had been removed from his post of Chief of the Staff to Kellermann just before the march to Valmy. The Representative Carra had found him living quietly at Paris and had brought him to the West about the end of March. He found 'Rochelle' with few experienced officers and in great confusion. Biron, the Commander-in-Chief, transferred, as I have said, from the command of 'Italie', did not join until the 28th May, and then remained at Niort, while a part of his army, styled the 'Armée de Saumur',

<sup>1</sup> Michaud, lix. 368-9; Mézaize, *Journal du Quartier-maître du 6<sup>e</sup> batt. bis, des volontaires du Calvados*, Caen, Jouan, 1909. This last work quotes several authorities which may be useful to any one wishing to know the details of this skirmish, important only for its effect.

was directed as an independent force by a 'Commission centrale', consisting of a body of Representatives together with the Generals at Saumur. This Saumur division acquired an unenviable reputation for its disorders and for the inefficiency of its Generals and of its troops. In the 'cour de Saumur' were seen 'exagérés à moustaches, sans-culottes à lambris dorés', Generals taken from the stage boards, all the *roués* and tricksters of Paris, strutting the streets in company with the worst of prostitutes. The battalions from Paris were in a state of unbridled insubordination, and Biron was almost complimentary when he described the army as simply 'un ramas d'hommes'. The presence of some good battalions was not an unmixed advantage, for they had a horror of the 'lâches bandits' of Santerre, the Brewer-General, whose guns had drowned the voice of Louis XVI on the scaffold. Indeed, one of the Representatives feared that the better troops would fire on Santerre's men.

Various were the sources from which this army was reinforced. In April 1793 arrived the 35th *Légion de Gendarmerie*, trained troops, in whose ranks many of the fine men of the disbanded Gardes Françaises were serving. These came from Paris with General Berruyer. So great was the need for men that in the next month the offer of the *grenadier-gendarmes*, forming the guard of the Convention, to serve in the West was accepted, and 183 of them started for Niort. Then in May came the *Légion germanique*, formed mainly of German deserters, among whom many of the former Swiss Guards and other men of Royalist tendencies had slipped themselves in. With this body came *adjudant-major* Augereau, who had joined it from the National Guard; also Lieutenant Marceau, fresh from the defence of Thionville. Complaints were made against the *Légion*, and some twenty-five officers, including Augereau and Marceau, were imprisoned as 'suspect' and on account of alleged disorders. One of the first mentions of the future Marshal is when Serjent, Marceau's brother-in-law, describes how he found Augereau listening to the enemy's guns and beating his head against the walls of his prison in anger at being unable to join his comrades. Marceau was released on the 8th June and Augereau four days later. Although most of the men of the *Légion* fought well, a large number deserted to the Royalists: some of them returned when in later years fortune went against them. The *gendarmerie*,



and the *gendarmes* of the Convention, were recalled to Paris in 1794. The *Légion germanique* was reorganized at Tours as the *Légion de la Fraternité* and in June 1793 was completely broken up; its infantry became the 13th Regiment of Light Infantry and the cavalry, styled for a moment the 22nd Chasseurs, formed the 11th Hussars, in which Augereau immediately became Captain. Marceau, promoted Adjutant-General, went to the Luçon division of 'Rochelle'. Other reinforcements included the *Légion de Rosenthal* and the *Légion du Nord*, both of which bodies became in time ordinary regiments. In May a most foolish system was tried in order to obtain regular troops without appearing to weaken other armies. The two armies, 'Nord' and 'Ardenne', were ordered to furnish men, not in regiments, but by taking six from each company of regulars and of volunteers of the first levy. To these were added at Orleans an equal number of recruits of the new levy. These so-called *bataillons de la formation d'Orléans*, fifteen in number, provided some 12,000 soldiers, but for long they had no cohesion, and it would have been much better to send, as had to be done later, whole regiments with a similar strength.<sup>1</sup> The leavening by raw recruits was, at least in many instances, not carried out, the men of the last levy being already formed into battalions whose temporary officers, not wishing to lose their places, stirred up their men to refuse to be incorporated with the regulars. The Representatives thought it wise to yield the point. No more regulars could be had at this time, and twelve battalions of the National Guard of Paris were sent to 'Rochelle'. With them went Santerre. These battalions from Paris were very bad. On the field they and other volunteer battalions, and, indeed, some of those of the Orleans formation, displayed the worst possible spirit, for whole regiments, and even whole columns, turned at the mere sight of the enemy, and vexed the souls of such men as Berthier by going off, singing gaily. All these corps in time disappeared under the *amalgame*, but it was with a very blunt sword that the Republic had to meet the Royalists in La Vendée.

Ronsin,<sup>2</sup> who deserves a chapter, and an evil one, to himself, had great influence at the moment both in La Vendée and at

<sup>1</sup> For these reinforcements see Susane, i. 347-9 and ii. 1-122; and Chuquet, *Légion Germanique*.

<sup>2</sup> For Ronsin see Michaud, xxxviii. 559-60; Chassin, *Vend. Pat.*, i. 542-8.

Paris. Formerly one of the supply officials attacked by Dumouriez in the North, he was, like Brune, one of the band hunting down those commanders that were not *sans-culottes*; and he was described by one angry Representative as an 'amphibious' official, General when preparations for an attack were to be made, but assistant to the War Minister on the day of battle. Still, both he and the Representatives had the sense, a thing extraordinary at the moment, to recognize the good qualities of Berthier as a staff officer, and the necessity for making use of them, so they employed him to go round the posts of the division, and to prepare a plan of campaign. Then, much against his own will, they forced him to replace General Menou as Chief of the Staff. Menou had held that post in 'Rochelle' for a short time, but had just been promoted General of Division. This association of Berthier with Menou is probably the explanation of Bonaparte's apparently strange choice of Menou for Egypt. His new position was doubly awkward for Berthier, firstly because the appointment lay with the real commander, Biron, and secondly because Berthier knew that he was 'suspect' to the War Minister, and that his appearance afresh in such a post might well ruin him, especially if any disaster befell the army. It is almost ludicrous to think of what must have been his horror at the Saumur muddle. However, the first thing was to defend that town, which was threatened by the Royalists, and which he only reached on the 8th June. Menou was given the command of the division, some 7,000 to 8,000 strong; Santerre led a column, and Lieutenant Marceau got up just in time to serve with the *Légion germanique*. On the 9th June the Vendéans, 25,000 to 30,000 strong, attacked. Berthier's column contained the only troops of the Line with the division, 1,200 men. At first he threw back the enemy, but on other parts of the field some of the patriot battalions ran at the sight of the Vendéans, while General Coustrard's life was threatened by his own men. As a last resource Menou and Berthier led on the cavalry; but at the moment of charging the men cried 'Treason' and bolted, and the victorious Vendéans poured into Saumur, shouting 'Vive le Roi: Vive la religion catholique!' They took 8,000 prisoners and 46 guns. Santerre had been preaching insubordination to the Paris battalions before the fight, and was now grieved when he saw these men throw down their arms and



run: he had not meant that. To do him justice, he now assisted Berthier in trying to cover the retreat, but the men got to Angers and Tours, if indeed some did not reach Paris. Berthier and Menou had both been wounded, and each had had two horses killed under him. Marceau won his captaincy in the rout by saving a Representative, Bourbotte, who had been hostile to him.

At Tours Berthier reorganized the division, which soon again occupied Saumur. He was more than ever anxious to escape from his position. Biron professed to approve of his appointment, but it is curious that almost the only personal connexion between the commander and his Chief of the Staff was when early in July Berthier was called to Niort for twenty-four hours to combine future operations with Biron. The Representatives at Saumur, acknowledging that it was to Berthier that the prompt reorganization of the division was due, asked only to be allowed to employ him under a chief. This the *Comité* sanctioned, but they refused to employ him at the head of the staff, for the belief in his Royalist opinions still told against him. As the same decree that put him in this false position ordered that 'le jeune Capet' was to be separated from his mother, it is evident that the *Comité* could be cruel as well as foolish. Fortunately the Representatives found a Colonel Bournet of the old army, who, whilst acting as Chief of the Staff, was sensible enough not only to use Berthier, but also to praise him, the best of the thing, had the Representatives only known it, being that Bournet himself was tainted with aristocracy. One incident will show the state of the army. Rossignol, the commander of the 35th *Légion de Gendarmerie*, some of the best of the troops, came to the Generals and Representatives assembled at Niort to say that he and his comrades would not march against the enemy unless they were six to four. Biron, quietly unhooking his sword, told the Representatives that he placed his command in their hands rather than lead cowards of this sort. The Representatives pacified him for the moment, but this very Rossignol was soon to succeed him. One great difficulty was the maddening suspicion under which all the ex-noble officers worked; even when they shed their blood on the field, they got but sneers, as when Menou, who had fought most bravely, was described as 'blessé comme un noble, c'est-à-dire par forme'.

Two rival plans of campaign now emerged, and the contest between the supporters of each lasted for some time. The Saumur Generals and Representatives wished to throw a large force on the centre of the insurrection, driving it back on the coast. Biron, on the other hand, was anxious to keep the Vendéans from being able to communicate with the English. He feared lest his posts by the sea might be crushed by forcing the enemy back on them, and he wished for a concentric attack by several columns. Berthier was in favour of the Saumur plan, while almost all the other officers from the regular army, Biron, Canclaux, and Grouchy, were opposed to it. Berthier in later years got the approval of Napoleon for his plan, but the Emperor never realized the difficulty of dealing with an insurrection of a population used to arms, and he did not allow for the great danger of the advance of a mass of troops into the enemy's district, namely that, as Hoche found, the bands disappearing from the front might close in rear of the column, and cut off its supplies. The Saumur force calmly drew up its plans, communicating them to Biron at Niort as orders to be complied with. We have an angry letter of Biron's to Berthier, complaining quite in the Napoleonic style of the manner in which everything sent from Paris was diverted to the Saumur force, and also of the ignorance in which he was kept by Berthier of all the details of the division. Stung at last by the neglect of his army by the War Minister (for nineteen of his letters remained unanswered) he offered his resignation, and took the course, which had been fatal to other commanders, of attacking the officials of the War Department, even telling the Minister that the agents of his agents everywhere preached insubordination and the partition of property, together with other serious charges. It was a sign of weakness on his part that he did not put himself at the head of the Saumur division and deal with the Generals, if he could not make head against the Representatives. He did at last start from Niort on the 4th July, meeting Berthier on the way, and going on with him to Saumur. Thence he accompanied the division to Angers, but, finding that the *Comité* was permitting it to carry out the advance of which he disapproved, he sent in his resignation to Paris and returned to Niort. There he found that he had been called to Paris. Ill and heavy-hearted, he set off for the Capital, doubtless thinking much of what he

and others had done towards establishing the Republic, under whose axe he was to pass on the 31st December 1793.

Meantime, free from any constraint, the Saumur division, some 12,000 strong, advanced under La Barolière. Menou led the advanced-guard, in which most of the regulars were placed; and Santerre had one of the three brigades of the main body. General of Brigade Davout (just arrived from the 'Nord') led a small body of cavalry. Neither Augereau nor Marceau accompanied this force. No one knew better than La Barolière how unfit was his division for the field, and he complained of the insubordination and drunkenness of his men and of the carelessness of the officers. On the 15th and 17th July attacks by the Vendéans were beaten off, but some battalions behaved badly, and Berthier, trying to stop two of them from firing on one another, came under their balls: this experience made him and others advise retreat, a course which was not adopted. On the 18th July, as the division reached Vihiers, the Vendéans delivered a general attack, having in their centre a body of German and Swiss deserters from the *Légion germanique*, who fought well. Menou and his men stood for long; he himself at one time charged almost alone with his staff and was again wounded, but most of the division behaved as badly as possible. Some of the Paris battalions cried 'Treason', and threatened their commanders: others turned at the mere sight of the enemy, and the day ended in a wild flight of the division back to Saumur, covered to some extent by Davout's cavalry. The Vendéans had been anxious to catch Santerre, whom they proposed to exhibit in a cage, but he forced his horse over a wall and got away. As Berthier said, the mass of the division had not fought at all and so had lost little except in guns.

This second defeat was too much even for the presumption of the Saumur leaders, and next day they sent Berthier to Paris with General Dutruy, to inform the *Comité* of the situation. In June the Minister had called Berthier to the Capital, nominally for the same purpose, but the form was often but a polite invitation to be guillotined, and the Saumur Representatives, perhaps viewing it in that light, had declared that the presence of the General was indispensable to the division. Now they thought his presence in Paris might be useful, but on arrival he, perhaps, went beyond what were



their wishes, for the report he and Dutruy submitted was a most biting one. The insubordination, the bad composition of the Paris battalions, they said, and the spirit of disorganization, made it impossible for the army to undertake any more operations. Eight battalions of trained infantry and other reinforcements were required in order to enable the division to act. To suggest doubts on the capacity of *sans-culotte* battalions was bad in the eyes of the Minister, but worse followed. Some of the Generals had not shown the necessary capacity (here Santerre was perhaps aimed at), and the service of supplies had constantly failed, although Ronsin and the Representatives had been duly warned. Now in answer to Biron's complaints about supplies the Minister had declared they must be unfounded as, besides the Representatives, Ronsin his assistant was on the spot with full powers and funds. Yet here was Berthier falling into the sin of Dumouriez, who in the North had declared that this very Ronsin knew nothing of his work in supplying the army! Strange as it seems to find Berthier agreeing with and trusted by the motley mob at Saumur, this report is proof that he had only the single eye to his work, for in blaming Ronsin he was attacking a man who had been his support, and who was all-powerful with the Minister. Bouchotte, the Minister, in his note on this report, asked what had been the influence of Berthier in its composition and considered it should be taken with reserve. Nothing would have been more natural in the course of events at this time than that the General should follow Biron to the guillotine, but the mass of certificates which he possessed, not only from regular officers such as Kellermann and Custine and his chief Bournet, but from such patriots as Santerre and Ronsin, saved his head. Still, notwithstanding his expostulations, he was not permitted to return to the West, nor to have any employment. Very wisely he remained living quietly in retirement at Pr cy-sur-Oise near Paris.

## II

### L'ARMÉE DES CÔTES DE BREST AND L'ARMÉE DE L'OUEST

(July 1793 to July 1794)

Effects of the surrender of Mayence and of Valenciennes. Grouchy, Rossignol, and Augereau. Successes and failures of the Vendéans. Cruelty of Turreau.

#### CONTEMPORARY EVENTS

- |      |   |
|------|---|
| 1793 | 23rd July. Surrender of Mayence to Allies.      |
|      | 28th July. Surrender of Valenciennes to Allies. |
|      | 8th September. Battle of Hondschoote.           |
|      | 27th September. Revolt of Toulon.               |
|      | 9th October. Lyons re-occupied.                 |
|      | 15th–16th October. Battle of Wattignies.        |
|      | 19th December. Toulon re-occupied.              |
| 1794 | 4th May. Spanish army driven out of France.     |
|      | 18th May. Battle of Tourcoing.                  |
|      | 1st June. Lord Howe's victory at sea.           |
|      | 26th June. Battle of Fleurus.                   |

THE interest now turns to the army of Brest under the able General Canclaux.<sup>1</sup> Here we find Grouchy in August commanding some 4,000 men at Ancenis. In his opinion 'Brest' was the best force in the West, but ought to remain on the defensive until more reinforcements should arrive. We have already seen how little capable of an offensive were also 'Rochelle' and 'Cherbourg'. In fact the situation was such that the Vendéans for long dreamt of marching on Paris and of re-establishing the Monarchy by their own arms alone; and, although it might have been difficult for them to organize their men for a long march, still, considering the nature of the forces they had to face, they might either have dealt the Republic a mortal blow at its heart, or have so drained the armies on the land-frontiers as to enable the foreign enemy to pierce through. Now, however, the faults of the Allies provided a weapon against them, and the situation was completely changed.

On the 23rd July 1793 Mayence capitulated to the Prussians,

<sup>1</sup> Michaud (1854 edition), vi. 532.



and the garrison, some 16,000 strong, marched out on the stipulation that they should not serve against the Allies for a year. That the Vendéans were fighting in the same cause as themselves never struck the Prussians, and Beauharnais rendered the Republic an inestimable service by recommending that the garrison should be employed in La Vendée. These troops accordingly were hurried west, reaching Tours on the 23rd–25th August 1793, about 14,000 strong. In the usual topsy-turvy style of the Republic the first thing done when this body had re-entered the French lines from Mayence was to arrest the commander, Aubert du Bayet<sup>1</sup>, and the principal officers, and then to release them: Kléber, for instance, who left Mayence as Adjutant-General, and who now entered La Vendée, was arrested, released, and promoted General of Brigade on the 17th August. The Armée de Mayence, as it was styled, was only partly composed of regulars, but the rest were volunteers of the first levy, well entered for war. This fine force remained a separate unit, proud, with good cause, of itself, until its very spirit and its superiority to the undisciplined levies round it raised so much hostility that in November 1793 it was broken up and disseminated amongst other armies all over France in order to destroy its *esprit de corps*. The blunder made by the Allies about the garrison of Mayence was repeated when Valenciennes surrendered to the Austrians and English on the 28th July. The garrison still furnished 6,000 efficient men, and these were directed on La Vendée. At Orleans the greater part was diverted to the South to suppress the revolt of Lyons, but, when that work was done, the men were sent into La Vendée. One would have thought that even the Allies, past-masters as they were in the art of blundering, would have profited by this lesson, but in 1799, when the disasters to the French in Italy caused the capitulation of several fortresses, the garrisons were released under similar conditions, and some 14,000 were consequently ordered to the West.

The question now arose which army ('Rochelle' or 'Brest') was to have the assistance of the seasoned men of 'Mayence'. Grouchy at this time was great on plans and advice, and he proposed that 'Mayence' should march on Nantes, join 'Brest',

<sup>1</sup> See Fazi du Bayet, Le Comte de, *Les Généraux Aubert du Bayet, &c.*, Paris, Champier, 1902, and Michaud (1854 edition), ii. 576.

and then carry out much the same plan as Biron's, that is, an attack by concentric columns, driving the enemy from the coast. Canclaux naturally approved of this plan and urged it on the *Comité* and the Representatives. Meanwhile, in the army of 'Rochelle', the Saumur Generals and Representatives proposed that 'Mayence' should join *them*, when their original plan of an attack in mass, for which they quoted Berthier's approval, should be carried out. Thus the struggle may be said to have been between the rival plans of two future Marshals. The question was settled at a council of Representatives and Generals at Saumur, where the scale was weighed down in favour of 'Brest' by the effect of the extraordinary appointment that had been made to the command of 'Rochelle'. After several abortive nominations of Generals, the *Comité* had taken the step of appointing Rossignol. This man had served as a private under the Monarchy for eight years and had the reputation of being a troublesome swashbuckler. The Revolution found him a working goldsmith in Paris and brought him forward as one of the 'Vainqueurs de la Bastille'. He came to La Vendée with the 35th *Légion de Gendarmerie*, was made one of the Lieut.-Colonels of that unit on the 9th April, and passed rapidly through the ranks of Adjutant-General, Colonel, and General of Brigade, until on the 15th July he became General of Division and on the 24th Commander-in-Chief. To show the degrading effect on the army of such an appointment it would be necessary to go fully into Rossignol's conduct: suffice it here to say that he had just been arrested by General Westermann for inciting the soldiers of the *Légion du Nord* to insurrection; but, sent to Paris in arrest, he had been released by the Convention, and had been hurried back to La Vendée to receive the rapid promotion I have recorded. Beyond personal bravery, Rossignol was utterly unfit for command, and even those Representatives and other patriots that most admired the fervour of his sentiments acknowledged his incapacity; he himself professed astonishment at the choice made of him for command. His wife, on hearing of his appointment, ran in fury to the Convention to attest that her husband was absolutely incapable of the task, and that he would heap folly on folly, till he ended like the other Generals. Her fears were vain: it was not for such Generals that the scaffold was raised.

Shocked at the scandal of such a man's being 'burlesquement devenu général', two of the Representatives suspended him from his functions on the 22nd August, and sent him to Paris to answer for his sins. He had always allowed his men to pillage. Arriving at Fontenay in the joy of command, he had pillaged the hotel in which he was lodged; although seals were on the effects, which belonged to an insurgent, even the women's dresses were taken for the prostitutes who accompanied him and his staff; and he had appropriated the horses of his predecessor, Biron. The Convention did not care. Rossignol was a true patriot and what more was required for command? As Tallien put it, 'it is not a question whether Rossignol drinks, whether he pillages, but whether the Commissioners have the right to dismiss him', a right freely acknowledged in other cases. It is true that violent murmurs arose amongst the members of the Convention when Tallien went on, 'Eh! que m'importe à moi quelques pillages particuliers', but the incorruptible Robespierre, then President, stilled these clamours, and Rossignol was sent back in triumph. It nearly went hard with the Representatives, although one of them plaintively defended himself against the fatal charge of moderation by explaining that he had burnt seven châteaux, three villages, and two mills. It is sad to think of the true-hearted Generals who went to the scaffold whilst this vile creature was supported. Such men were a danger to all good officers, for, when Rossignol quailed before some responsibility, he was at once assured by the Representatives that it would be on his advisers that the punishment for defeat would fall. The real cause of his favour was acknowledged by Tallien: 'Il est beau de voir Rossignol, sorti de cette classe tant dédaignée par la noblesse, succéder à Monseigneur le Duc de Biron'.

It is not to the credit of Captain Augereau that this extraordinary commander took him as A.D.C., and here I must take a closer view of the future Marshal, whom we shall meet so often in the history of the southern armies. At this time Pierre-François-Charles Augereau was 36 years of age, a fine-looking man, remarkable in the midst of a very slovenly mass by reason of his strictly correct dress. His long pigtail, his still longer boots, and his powdered hair, all created an impression on the parade ground. Off parade he was known as a formidable



duellist, and his fervent patriotism reconciled men to his strict discipline. His career had been most dubious and, merely referring to the account given by Marbot, his A.D.C.<sup>1</sup>, I follow that of Chuquet.<sup>2</sup> He was born in Paris; his father was a servant, and his mother is said to have come from Munich. She spoke only German to him, so that he knew that language well. He enlisted in 1773 in the Irish regiment of Clare, in the service of France, and served in Elliott's company until 1776, when he was discharged on account of a false statement, made on enlistment, that he was Irish, which to an officer sounds like getting rid of a troublesome soldier by a technicality. Next, after little more than a month, he enlisted in the Dragoon regiment of Artois. Here he served in Mandelot's company, but by September he was gone. Where did he go in this September 1776? Here we may try to fit in part of Marbot's account, which asserts that, having killed his Colonel, he left with another soldier's pass in order to avoid the court-martial which afterwards sentenced him to death, although he had only acted in self-defence. Going to Geneva, to the family of the man whose pass he was using, he 'travelled' with their goods (they were watchmakers) to the shores of the Black Sea. Here his fine stature won him admission as Sergeant in the Russian army, where, says Marbot, he served under Souvaroff, being wounded at Ismailoff, a thing we shall see to be inconsistent with other dates. His regiment went to Poland, where he deserted to the Prussians, serving first in the regiment of Prince Henry, and then in the King's Guards. After two years' service he was hoping for promotion, when the King remarked him, but being told he was French, said, 'So much the worse, for, if he had been Swiss or German, we should have made something of him'. Augereau deserted in disgust and fought his way out of Prussia, as Le Blondin in Thackeray's *Barry Lyndon* attempted to do. Going to Dresden, Augereau supported himself by giving lessons in dancing and fencing, until the amnesty declared at the birth of the first son of Louis XVI in 1781 enabled him to return to Paris.

Here I have tried to make part of Marbot's account tally with dates, but Ismailoff was taken in 1789, and Augereau was back in France, if not by 1781, at least in 1785, for, according to Chuquet, on the 21st May 1785 he enlisted in the cavalry regi-

<sup>1</sup> Marbot, 184-8.

<sup>2</sup> Chuquet, *Légion germanique*, 51-3.

ment 'Royal Bourgogne'. General Susane, who on this point may be a safer guide, puts this about 1775. Here he served in the company of Essarts, and now he gave his name as Augereau. On the 8th August 1785 he passed as fencing-master into the Carabiniers de Monsieur. Then, on the 8th September 1787 he again deserted, and in his absence was sentenced to ten passages before a hundred men, armed with rods, and to eight years' imprisonment. This apparently is the forced desertion which Marbot puts as occurring before Augereau went to Russia and attributes to a duel, whilst Michaud asserts that Augereau went off to take his Captain's horses to Switzerland, where he sold them.<sup>1</sup> Here we get again out of the bounds of fact. Augereau asserted that he was sent with other officers and *sous-officiers* under the Baron de Salis to instruct the troops of Naples, and became *sous-lieutenant*. He married the daughter of a Greek merchant against her father's will and fled with her to Lisbon, where, after some time, he was imprisoned by the Inquisition. His wife, according to Marbot, got the Captain of a French merchant vessel to insist on his release, and he returned to France. Here, according to his own account, which seems unsupported, he enlisted in the National Guard in March 1792.

How much of Marbot's account can we believe? I have pointed out the difficulty about Ismailoff, and Marbot seems to confuse Frederick the Great with his father, the lover of tall men, but neither Prussian ruler would have been likely to have overlooked a fine man of their Guard for long. Augereau had no papers to prove his services, alleging that the 'suppôts de l'Inquisition' had seized these at Lisbon. Probably we may assume that he did really serve in Prussia, if not in Russia, as well as in Naples. The name of his first wife, Gracht, seems odd for a Greek. Anyhow, we get on firm ground in March 1793, when, as I have said, he entered the *Légion germanique* as Adjutant-Major of their cuirassiers. This Legion was one of the bodies then in fashion, organized of cavalry, infantry, and artillery, and intended to be composed of Germans. Augereau himself, it will be remembered, spoke German well. The Revolution thus found Augereau a fine, skilled fencer and a braggart, but a trained soldier, with experience of foreign armies, including that of Prussia, then the admiration of Europe. His appoint-

<sup>1</sup> Michaud, lvi. 547.



ment as A.D.C. gives us one of those contrasts to which I have referred, for at this moment in 1793 we find Grouchy acting as a General of Division and the trusted lieutenant and adviser of a good chief; yet he was to be the last Marshal appointed by Napoleon, whilst Augereau, an unknown Captain, on the staff of an impossible commander, was to be in the first batch.

The prospect of seeing such forces as 'Rochelle' and 'Mayence' in the hands of Rossignol was too much for the members of the council at Saumur, and a large majority voted in favour of Grouchy's plan with the assent of Rossignol himself and in spite of Ronsin's horrified exclamation, 'Then poor Rossignol will have nothing!' Canclaux, who had attended the council, now returned to Nantes to carry out the plan, but, before he could advance, Nantes itself was attacked by the Vendéans, on the 5th September. Grouchy was wounded in the engagement, in which the Vendéans were beaten off. The Armée de Mayence now joined at Nantes; and Canclaux, leaving Grouchy to command that town, began his advance on the left bank of the Loire, first moving south-west, and then wheeling round northwards on Mortagne. The columns of 'Rochelle' were to have joined in this operation, but Rossignol suddenly halted his men and even drew them back. The Vendéans thus could turn their attention to each army in succession; and, first beating 'Rochelle', they then fell on the advanced-guard of 'Mayence', under Kléber, on the 19th September at Torfou. Kléber had two thousand good troops, but the Vendéans outnumbered him vastly and fought splendidly. Never, said Kléber, was there a more desperate combat. He himself was wounded in the right shoulder, and had to draw back with the loss of four guns, but was saved by the approach of the main body under Canclaux and Aubert du Bayet. The Vendéans were with good cause proud and delighted at beating the fine troops from Mayence, then the last hope of the Republicans. Grouchy had made a successful sortie from Nantes, but Canclaux's right column, under Beysser, was surprised and routed at Montaigu, and Canclaux, unsupported by Rossignol and 'Rochelle', retired to Nantes again.

On the 25th September Canclaux again advanced, with the mass of his troops, on Mortagne, up the Sèvre-Nantaise, hoping

vainly for the support of 'Rochelle'. On the 6th October he was successful at Saint-Symphorien, where Kléber, anxious to repair what he was annoyed to hear called his 'check' at Torfou, bore the brunt of the day, telling his men when they cried out they had no guns, 'No, but we will go together to look for those we were obliged to abandon at Torfou!' Then, on the 7th October, just as Grouchy was about to move forwards from Nantes in support of his commander, he learnt that he and Canclaux were both suspended in virtue of the decree of the 29th September as ex-nobles, whilst Aubert du Bayet was called to Paris, and removed from command. Grouchy had been expecting this order, for not only had he been a noble, but he had served in the 'Maison du Roi'. Menou had already ceased to serve. Grouchy left with a certificate from the Representatives that he had always given an example of valour, courage, and prudence, and that he had shown himself a good Republican. The council of the commune of Nantes expressed their regrets. At first, according to the law, he was prohibited from residing within twenty leagues of the armies of the Republic, of the frontiers, or of Paris, but later the fact of his having been wounded released him from this restriction. Though his men were ready to use force to retain him, he left for his home at Pontécoulant<sup>1</sup> in Normandy. About the same time Augereau, promoted Colonel and Adjutant-General, left for the Armée des Pyrénées Orientales.

The removal of Canclaux and Aubert du Bayet was part of a great change brought about by the intrigues of Ronsin, who went to Paris, where he was soon made General of the Armée Révolutionnaire, and where he urged before Bouchotte, always ready to suspect any officer, that these two Generals, whose plan he had opposed, were responsible for the defeats of both 'Brest' and of 'Rochelle'. While Rossignol was to be transferred to 'Brest', 'Rochelle', enlarged by the addition of the Department of Loire Inférieure to its district, with the troops of the Armée de Mayence and those of 'Brest' that had crossed to the left of the Loire, was to take the new title of Armée de l'Ouest and to be under Léchelle. This change, by which 'Ouest' became far the strongest of the armies, and was taken from Rossignol, seems to denote some weakening in the belief in that General, even on

<sup>1</sup> About 40 kilos south-west of Caen, in Calvados.

the part of his friends, Ronsin and Bouchotte. It is just possible that to this may also be due the departure of Augereau for the South. His friend, General Turreau, was sick, like many officers of La Vendée, and had got himself made General of Division on the 8th October and transferred to 'Pyrénées Orientales', although he was taken aback when he found that he was to command that army. Augereau, if not a friend of his, certainly wrote to him as a kindred spirit, urging him to strike, thunder, crush, all the intriguers and caballers of his new army, so that only *sans-culottes* might remain. This has an unpleasant sound when one remembers that it was the crushing of French officers, not the Spanish foe, that the future Marshal thought the more important business.

Now comes a wretched period, which lasted till the régime of Terror fell with Robespierre in July 1794, and during which much of the history of La Vendée is one tale of massacre. Léchelle,<sup>1</sup> the new commander, had been, like Rossignol, a private under the *ancien régime* and a fencing master at Saintes. Elected chief of a battalion of volunteers, he had displayed bravery and tenacity during the defence of Valenciennes. On the surrender of the place he had defended one of the Representatives, Cochon, who was menaced by the people, and in return Cochon got him made General of Brigade. He had probably known Ronsin in Belgium, and he was brought to La Vendée with such a reputation that he was first made General of Division and then given the important command of 'Ouest'. There he displayed his complete incapacity. On the 8th October he reached Montaigu and took command. Kléber, whom the Representatives had forced to hold the interim charge, laid a map before him, and explained the plan on which Canclaux had been working. Without looking at the map Léchelle said he approved, but that, 'C'est sur le terrain qu'il s'agit de se montrer. Il faut marcher en ordre majestueusement et en masse'. Kléber quietly folded up his map, while Merlin, one of the Representatives, exclaimed that he believed they tried to send them the most ignorant men they could find. The extraordinary thing was that, whilst the *Comité* believed Léchelle to unite along with audacity the necessary talents to end the war, his appointment was worse even than that of Rossignol, who, al-

<sup>1</sup> Léchelle, L'Échelle, or Leschelle, Michaud (1854 edition), xxiii. 516.



though he had a knack of being absent from any battlefield, still was taken as being brave. Kléber, a trustworthy if harsh critic, describes Léchelle as 'the most cowardly of soldiers, the worst of officers, and the most ignorant leader ever seen. He did not understand maps, hardly knew how to sign his name, and did not once approach within cannon shot of the rebels; in a word, there was nothing comparable to his poltroonery and his inefficiency, except his arrogance, his brutality, and his obstinacy'. Such was the man to whom one of the most important armies of the Republic was entrusted. Westermann, a violent but brave General, cried, 'No, I shall not obey a coward', and demanded his own dismissal, while the men were equally disgusted. When this commander tried to go round the ranks with Kléber after a defeat in which he had remained with the reserve, keeping it motionless, the cry of, 'A bas Léchelle! Vive du Bayet! Qu'on nous le rende! Vive Kléber!' made him withdraw. During the rout he had wailed, 'What have I done that I should command such cowards?', when a soldier of the Armée de Mayence retorted, 'What have we done that we should be commanded by such a s. . . ?' The old soldiers of Mayence were naturally prominent in these demonstrations, which were one cause of the dissolution of that fine body.

Now came an unwise move on the part of the enemy. Pressed in La Vendée, the mass of the insurgents, some 60,000 men, broke across the Loire at Saint-Florent on the 16-17th October to seek a port on the channel which they could hold, and so draw supplies and support from England. They struck back at Léchelle, who followed, and they half-shattered his army, but, instead of making for Cherbourg, which lay open on the land side, they made for Granville, whose walls they were unable to force. They then turned back to recross the Loire, as furious and as dangerous as a wounded bear. So formidable were they that the Representatives with 'Ouest' got Léchelle to resign on account of ill-health, and he played the invalid so well that he soon died. Kléber, now the main personage with 'Ouest', refused the command, and on the 12th October, when the army reached Vitré, it met Rossignol, in whose district they now were, and who took command of both armies, 'Ouest' as well as 'Brest'. Indeed, as all the active part of 'Cherbourg', some 6,000 men under Sepher, by an order of the *Comité*, was sent to



oppose the Vendéans, Rossignol was really, as he says, in command of all three armies. Although about 30,000 men were now marching against the Vendean army, Rossignol was beaten off from Dol and had to retreat on Rennes, while the Vendéans marched south on Mayenne and Laval for the Loire. Grouchy now nearly reappeared on the scene, for when a body of National Guards of his district was called out to march against the Vendéans at Laval, they urged him to put himself at their head. This he wisely refused, though he agreed to accompany them as a private, but fortunately for them and him they were recalled. So serious was the moment that the *Comité*, thoroughly alarmed, weakened other armies to reinforce La Vendée. Jourdan, then commanding the Armée du Nord, was ordered to send 10,000 men here; and these arrived in the middle of December. The Armée des Pyrénées Occidentales was also ordered to send a similar force, but it only dispatched two battalions, some 2,500 or 3,000 strong, which started about the 20th January 1794.

Meanwhile, the Generals and Representatives of 'Ouest' and 'Brest' at Rennes felt that the command could not be left to the incompetent Rossignol and they followed Kléber's suggestion that a General should be nominated to command the troops concentrated at Rennes. Marceau was Kléber's proposal for this post and, when the Representatives feared the impetuosity of a General of 24, Kléber, with all the maturity of 34, undertook to control his plans. The two had already met in the operations on the left bank of the Loire, just before the Vendéans crossed the river, and they had begun a friendship which was to continue until the guns of French and Austrians on the Rhine announced the death of the younger of the two. This appointment of Marceau for the chief command of the united forces of 'Ouest', 'Brest', and the division of Cherbourg, that is, the Rennes force, was submitted to the *Comité*, who could not abandon their darling child, Rossignol, and they ordered him to remain in the chief command of the united body. Naturally enough, they considered that Marceau was too young to be given permanent command of any army, and they ordered Turreau to return from the 'Pyrénées Orientales' and take charge of the Armée de l'Ouest; Marceau to retain that command until Turreau arrived. No real attention would seem to have been taken of this order, and Rossignol, apparently by some later order, went off to the

other troops of his army of Brest, handing over the chief command to Marceau. Officially Rossignol was held to have commanded the three armies until the 4th December, when Marceau relieved him. On the 26th December Turreau was held to have commanded the Armée de l'Ouest with the division sent from the army of Cherbourg, leaving 'Brest' to Rossignol. Whatever was the official view of the proper commander, Marceau took the lead of the amalgamated force at Rennes, and with the support and advice of Kléber he destroyed the Vendean army in the two sanguinary battles of Le Mans on the 12th and the 13th of December, and of Savenay on the 23rd December. The details are necessarily cruel, for the host from the left bank of the Loire had brought with it a multitude of women and children, and had fought most desperately. The main hope of the Vendéans, their 'Grande Armée', which they had so unwisely hazarded on the right bank of the Loire, was destroyed, the mass of their combatants had perished, and there was no longer any possibility of their being able to meet the Republicans in the open field or to march on Paris. Yet on the right bank of the Loire they left the 'Chouannerie' to continue, a style of warfare of posts at least as difficult to deal with as that in La Vendée, whilst on the left bank of the river the struggle was to last for another two years. As for the awful slaughter of the prisoners in cold blood, whether by steel, shot, or drowning, that has nothing to do with the men with whose history we are concerned.<sup>1</sup>

It was Turreau that ought to have been in command at Savenay, but this General delayed for some time before joining. He had written angrily to Marceau complaining of not receiving information and ordering him to await instructions. This infuriated Marceau, who replied: 'I am before Savenay. Early to-morrow I shall attack the enemy, who will be destroyed. If you want to be a witness of the end of this war, come promptly!' Turreau, however, did not take over the command until the 30th December. Under him the war was to enter on a new and more barbarous stage. He<sup>2</sup> was a man of strange disposition, and his character was very different from that of his cousin, Louis Turreau, Davout's step-father, now one of the Repre-

<sup>1</sup> See, however, the rather peculiar account in Chassin, *Vend. Pat.* iv.

<sup>2</sup> Général Baron Louis-Marie Turreau de Linières (1756-1816). See Michaud (1854 edition), xiii. 303-4.

sentatives in La Vendée. His first idea, he professed, had been to offer a general amnesty, but, not receiving any reply from the government, and probably influenced both by Rossignol and by Robert, the Chief of the Staff, he prepared his own scheme for a total destruction of La Vendée by the 'promenade civique des colonnes infernales'. After sending back the column detached from 'Cherbourg', he still had 80,000 men, including the division from the 'Nord', 8,000 to 10,000 strong. Twelve columns were to scour the country, removing all grains, &c., and burning all villages, farms, and houses. The bayonets were to end all rebels found. Professing to require the authority of the Representatives before putting to the sword the women and children, he acted without this authority. For example, the instruction given by one of his lieutenants, ordering all the brigands to be bayoneted, continues, 'On en agira de même avec les filles, femmes, et enfants qui seront dans ce cas'. The persons that were only suspected were not to be spared, but reference was first to be made to the General of the column. The 24th January 1794 saw the beginning of this work, worse surely than even the cruel massacre at Nantes of the prisoners taken from the Grande Armée of the Vendéans. Had the columns been crushing some inferior, uncivilized race, one could deplore yet understand the work, but that Frenchmen should have slain men, women, and children of their own race in cold blood can only be realized by reading the calm reports of the columns, where, for example, one officer is stated to have had bayoneted 'about thirty suspected persons, of both sexes', and another to have done the same to about twenty, as many men as women, convicted in a most summary way of participating in the troubles. At Bellenoue, 'la troupe républicaine' shot the wife of Joseph Vrigonneau, far advanced in pregnancy, two of the woman's children, one of about eighteen months, and the second from three to four years, besides three children of Pierre Lejean, one of two months, the second from seven to eight, and the third of ten years, with their mother; also five to six other women. Had not the Representative Carrier said, 'The women of La Vendée! it is from them that the race of enemies is reborn. The children! They are vipers to be crushed'. 'We will make a cemetery of France rather than not regenerate it in our own fashion.'



It is pleasant to know that none of the future Marshals had any share in this work, on which the gallant Alexandre Dumas expressed the opinion of almost every real officer, when he said that he would have blown out his brains rather than execute such orders. Such men as Canclaux, Grouchy, and Kléber had strongly opposed the system of plunder into which the troops were so much tempted, and indeed in these last operations almost forced, and in which the Saumur division had always indulged. Kléber believed that he could put an end to the war, but Turreau had his own diabolical plan and would not listen. As for Marceau, that gallant and chivalrous lad was sick at heart and longing to withdraw from the bloody scene. To him his two battles had been two carnages, and he shrank from laurels, stained, as he said, by French blood. It was against foreigners he wished to fight: 'there alone is honour and glory'. Honour and death alike beckoned him to the Rhine. It was in such a mood that he received from the executioner of Nantes a case containing a gold watch left to him by a girl whom he had tried to save from the guillotine. When Turreau was with 'Pyrénées Orientales', he had recommended Marceau for command there, but now, whether from jealousy or resentment at his angry letter, he disliked both him and Kléber, and one of his first acts was to put them both aside. Marceau left the army in January 1794 in order to rest at Rennes: thence he joined the Armée des Ardennes. Kléber, whose rank as General of Division had been confirmed in April 1794, left at the end of that month for the Armée du Nord, almost as much disgusted with La Vendée as was Marceau, and as glad as he to leave for a form of warfare that seemed light indeed compared with this cruel struggle.

These were sons of Fame: as for those of infamy, Turreau never got his deserts. After the destruction of its Grande Armée, La Vendée had been settling down, but he forced it into fresh revolt. Fortunately, however, the columns took the term 'suspect' to have so wide a significance that they fell on everyone they found in the country, and the truest patriots—officials of *communes*, National Guards, men who had fought against the Vendéans—found that they too would not be spared, so that *La Vendée Patriote*, whose history is written by M. Chassin, shrieked until Paris heard. On the 13th May the *Comité* sus-



pended Turreau. He was almost immediately sent to command the division at Belle-Île-en-Mer. Arrested after Thermidor, when he could have profited by the amnesty of the 26th October 1795, which released other Terrorists, he claimed to be tried, and was acquitted by a court-martial on the ground that he had only carried out the orders of the Convention, although he himself had professed to have taken the severest measures 'sans aucune autorisation'. He published his memoirs and, after Fructidor 1797, was employed in the 'Sambre-et-Meuse'. He served under the Empire and became Baron. In 1816 he revisited La Vendée on the staff of the Duc d'Angoulême, and he died in 1816 in favour with the Royalists, and was given a complimentary paragraph in the *Moniteur*; for there was little the restored Bourbons could not swallow. Justice dealt better with others. Rossignol was removed from the command of 'Brest' in April 1794, and, after participating in several movements, became suspected by the First Consul, probably erroneously, of complicity in the Royalist affair of the infernal machine of the Rue Nicaise on the 24th December 1800. He was transported to the Seychelles, where he died in 1802. Ronsin, who had been the evil genius of the Republic in La Vendée, was not forgotten. The Revolution had a happy knack of destroying its own children. Placed at the head of the Armée Révolutionnaire in October 1793, Ronsin became involved in the Hébertist conspiracy of March 1794, and was guillotined. Seldom did the Revolutionary axe do better work.

Turreau was replaced temporarily by Vimeux, an old officer, one of the former commanders in Mayence, who had for a moment commanded 'Brest' in October 1793. The Armée de l'Ouest was now diminished both in territory and strength, for the district on the right bank of the Loire, which had been transferred to it in October 1793, was now restored to 'Brest'. As for its troops, nominally in April 1794 it had been 103,812 strong, but of these only 50,000 were disposable. Now it was to supply large drafts, which the remonstrances of Vimeux got reduced to 3,000 for 'Pyrénées Occidentales' and 15,000 for the Rhine frontier. The troops left to l'Ouest were but 30,000 or, according to Vimeux, 25,954 combatants, and these had 10,000 muskets fewer than they required. Masses of recruits, nominally 50,000, were to come, but they would have to be armed. Heavily en-

gaged as he was against the Vendéans with his diminished forces, Vimeux was delighted when a decree of the 16th August 1794 replaced him by Alexandre Dumas, who had commanded the Armée des Alpes for a time and had since been commanding the *École de Mars* close to Paris. When he took command on the 7th September the strength of 'l'Ouest' was 45,000 men.

### III

## L'ARMÉE DES CÔTES DE BREST, L'ARMÉE DES CÔTES DE CHERBOURG, AND L'ARMÉE DE L'OUEST.

(July 1794 to November 1795)

Hoche comes to the West. First pacification of La Vendée. Renewal of the struggle. Quiberon.

#### CONTEMPORARY EVENTS

- 1794 10th July. French occupy Brussels.  
27th July. End of the Terror.  
4th August. French take San Sebastian.  
17th November. Battle of Figueras.
- 1795 20th January. French occupy Amsterdam.  
22nd July. Peace with Spain.  
5th September. French armies cross the Rhine.  
5th October. Insurrection of 13th Vendémiaire suppressed.  
26th October. The Directory established.  
22nd–24th November. Battle of Loano.  
October to December. French retreat from the Rhine.

It was the *coup d'état* of the ninth Thermidor, the 27th July 1794, by which Robespierre and his party fell, that, unintentionally so far the authors of the stroke were concerned, put an end to the system of terror, and within a few months it became as great a crime to have been a Terrorist as formerly to have been accused of *Modérantisme*. One result in La Vendée was to bring better appointments to command. Rossignol's successor with 'Brest' was Moulin<sup>1</sup>: in October 1794 Dumas left 'Ouest', and succeeded Moulin with 'Brest', while the worthy Canclaux returned to La Vendée and took command of 'Ouest'. Canclaux, satisfied with Grouchy's former service under him, now at once applied for that General as his Chief of the Staff. Grouchy had been restored to his rank on the 19th November 1794, and on the 28th of that month he took up his new duties, thus gaining fresh openings for that advice he was so liberal with.

<sup>1</sup> Général Jean-François-Auguste Moulin (1752–1810), Michaud, lxxiv. 476–9; Chassin, *Pac.*, iii. 221–98.

Amongst the new commanders was one who was to become the most prominent figure in this theatre. In April 1794 Hoche, as we have seen,<sup>1</sup> had been imprisoned in the Conciergerie at Paris, notwithstanding his relief of Landau. Thermidor released him and he left the prison after, as he said, 'four months passed in all the agony of death', just as his enemy Saint-Just entered it. His nomination to command 'Cherbourg', the least important army in La Vendée, was obtained, it is said, by Carnot, and he arrived there in September 1794. The hysterical note had not left his utterances, but he was now a wiser, if a sadder, man than he had been when first given the command of the 'Moselle'. In November Alexandre Dumas, disgusted with civil war, left for a division in the 'Sambre-et-Meuse', and Hoche, protesting his unfitness, was given the command of 'Brest' in addition to that of 'Cherbourg'. Canclaux, however, was the senior General and occupied the leading position, for 'Brest' was drained of troops to reinforce him, and 'Cherbourg' had been thrown into confusion by the dispatch of its men to resist the invasion of the right bank of the Loire by the Vendéans: indeed these two armies had sent 20,000 men to Canclaux. Had Canclaux remained, Hoche might never have been more than a subordinate commander. What is curious is that Hoche did not seem to retain any bitterness against the party that had disgraced and imprisoned him, and he was more inimical than ever to the Constitutional, or, as he considered it, the Royalist party. Active in the field and in proposing plans, Hoche soon made himself prominent, especially so because his district on the right of the Loire was becoming more disturbed by the growth of the *Chouannerie*. Perhaps the first sign of his rise here was given when on the 18th January 1795 Carnot praised him to the *Comité* as 'a man active and enlightened, and who wishes for the end of this deplorable war'. Whilst he was to be consulted on the subject of the pacification, for which hopes were growing, his hands were to be strengthened: no more troops were to be drawn from 'Brest' and 'Cherbourg' for the Armée de l'Ouest, whilst 12,000 picked men were to be sent from the 'Nord' and the 'Sambre-et-Meuse', whose successes had relieved the pressure on the Rhine, to reinforce him. This draft came under Duhesme, the future patron of Thiébault in

<sup>1</sup> Phipps, ii. 123-6.



Italy, and arrived early in February. Still, in April 1795 the strength of his two armies was only 68,695 men, of whom many were undrilled recruits, and 12,000 were in hospital.

For the moment every one wished for peace, whether permanent or only temporary; and it is permissible to believe that even the local Republicans had been brought to that opinion by the lesson Turreau had given them of their own danger. Already on the 2nd December 1794 the Convention had declared an amnesty, and the Representatives with the Armée de l'Ouest were even unduly anxious to come to terms with the Vendéans. Conferences began between them and Charette at La Jaunaye, near Nantes, where on the 17th February 1795 the first pacification was achieved. The Representatives at Rennes with Hoche's armies had their conferences with the Royalists under Cormartin at La Prévalaye, and came to terms on the 20th April. Practically the Vendéans were left triumphant, for, though they recognized the Republic and nominally submitted to it, they obtained most of what they had fought for. They were to be exempt from the conscription for some years, indeed, they furnished no conscripts until 1803; they retained their arms, except their artillery, which, indeed, had been almost all lost. Their local government was for the present to be specially provided for, so that the Republican territorial divisions did not come into operation; a territorial force, some 2,000 men in La Vendée, was to be maintained under arms; they were to receive a subsidy of twenty millions, two millions of which were to go to meet the bonds issued by the Vendéans, and the rest for the restoration of the land after its sufferings. Some things promised well for peace. The Vendéans had risen mainly for the sake of religion and to avoid the levy of men for the armies. Now they obtained full liberty for religious worship, except outside their buildings; and, as we have just seen, they were free from conscription. They had also revolted against the Republican tyranny and had hoped to restore the King. The Monarchy was lost, but the fall of Robespierre, and all the changes made by Thermidor, gave hopes of a sensible government for the future. On the other hand, some things tended towards renewed war. The *garde territoriale*, the armed force to be retained, was nominally to waste away, because it was not to be recruited, but, as both Hoche and Grouchy saw, it gave a

nucleus round which fresh armies of insurgents could be formed. Matters were made worse on this point when Stofflet, the last of the leaders to yield, came to terms with the Representatives at Saint-Florent, near Angers, on the 2nd May 1795, for not only did he get the same conditions as Charette had done, but he too was allowed 2,000 men, to the intense disgust of Grouchy. Also the fact that the Vendean leaders were allowed to remain in the very districts in which they had fought formed a constant temptation, for men who had commanded, to retain their hold on their former troops. Cormartin, for instance, lived at Rennes as if he was lord of the land, issuing, said Hoche, as many passports as if he had been a municipality. All through, indeed, the Vendean leaders adopted the most menacing manners. At the pacification of Stofflet one of them was presented with a tri-coloured plume, which the Representative placed in his hat. Shaking his head, the Vendean remarked that it seemed heavy and not well secured. The most dangerous point of all was that the Vendean understood that, far from entering their country, the troops of the Republic were to withdraw even from the cantonments they occupied; that is to say, the country was to be left to itself, as a sort of inner world, or, as the Vendean would have said, Kingdom. Whilst no formal stipulation to this extent was made, the Representatives acknowledged to the *Comité* that 'le retrait des petits cantonnements', but not the evacuation of all the country they had conquered, had been 'en quelque sorte promis lors de la pacification'. Certainly it was well understood that no further advance was to be made, as the following incident shows. The Republicans wanted to attack Stofflet while he was still holding out after the agreement with Charette, but Grouchy found that Charette objected to his country's being traversed by the columns, which might alarm the inhabitants. He therefore proposed to inform him that another, though more inconvenient, line of march should be adopted. Also, when Charette objected to Canclaux's marching some troops from Chantonay to Palluau, the General justified himself by the necessity of sparing his men a longer route. In fact, in hastening after peace, the Representatives had prepared war, for the situation was intolerable.

The Representatives must have understood that they were going farther than the Generals thought right. Canclaux and

his staff, no doubt including Grouchy, had escorted the Representatives from Nantes to La Jaunaye but, either by his own wish or by that of the Representatives, he had remained in the rain outside of the tents in which the negotiations were carried on, till the treaty was signed; and then he hesitated to accept the embrace of Charette. Unlike those of Cormartin, the troops of Charette did not shine alongside the Republicans, but he came in state with 200 or 300 cavalry, himself well dressed and finely mounted, wearing a plume of green, black, and white, and a medallion on which was a crucifix with the legend, 'Vous qui plaignez, considérez mes souffrances'. The conclusion of the peace was the signal for a burst of enthusiasm and of fraternization, and on the 26th February 1795 the Representatives, Charette and his followers, Canclaux and his officers, all entered Nantes intermingled, preceded by music, surrounded by a happy crowd of the people, welcomed by salvos of artillery, and passing with uncovered heads the place where the guillotine had stood. Remembering all the cruel massacres which had taken place at Nantes, the 'Republican marriages', where young men and girls, lashed together in horrid mockery, had been thrown into that bloody river the Loire, one can but wonder at the levity displayed in this entry of 'bandits' and Republicans. Charette himself, taciturn and anxious, for the peace was abhorrent to many of his late followers, only stayed one day in the town. In one year's time he was again to pass through the crowded streets of Nantes, this time led by his captors in barbarous triumph as a show before his execution. He re-entered prison at one o'clock, and they danced 'Ça ira' on the same spot where a year before he had cried, 'Vive la Union!'. Still, for the time all was peace: 'Il n'est plus de Vendée', proclaimed the delighted Representatives, and on the 19th February 1795, by instructions from Canclaux, Grouchy issued an order announcing that, instead of gathering laurels stained with French blood, the troops for the future would plant the olives of peace.

Small wonder that such a pacification was disapproved of by Canclaux, Hoche, and Grouchy, and that even the soldiers were puzzled by the situation. Certainly it was in no sense Hoche's work; indeed, seeing how things were going, he had tried to avoid all participation in it by applying for leave of



absence, and he said afterwards, truly enough, that he had been a stranger to it. He had good cause for annoyance during the negotiations, for, at the request of Cormartin, the leader of the Chouans, he had been excluded from the conference at La Prévalaye,<sup>1</sup> and, though he had held aloof from the Royalists, their suggestions that he might play the part of Monk, to which he had listened in silence, might well have led him to the scaffold. Even before the formal signature of the treaty Cormartin and his band had entered Rennes as if in triumph, together with Hoche and the Representatives, and Hoche's own escort of poverty-stricken officers and badly clothed, half-starved men, contrasted sadly with the well-equipped 'bandits' at whose head rode Cormartin, laurel-decked, with his pockets full of cash and cockades, which he distributed amongst the people. At the grand supper that followed, in the presence of a crowd, poor Hoche naturally found the scene 'un peu gauche, pour ne pas dire indécente'.

A fresh mortification awaited Hoche, for on the 20th April the Convention decreed a new separation of his two armies 'Brest' and 'Cherbourg'. He was to retain 'Brest' with the Departments of Ille-et-Vilaine, Côtes-du-Nord, Finistère, Morbihan, and those parts of Loire-Inférieure and Maine-et-Loire which were on the right bank of the Loire. 'Cherbourg' was to cover the departments of Seine-Inférieure, Eure, Sarthe, Mayenne, Orne, Calvados, and Manche, and its command was given to Aubert du Bayet, who now returned to La Vendée. Hoche naturally took this as a disgrace, and indeed he had been denounced to the *Comité*, for his attitude displeased both sides, but, if the *Comité* had less confidence in him for the moment, the great increase of the Chouannerie which, notwithstanding the pacification, was exciting all the departments on the right bank of the Loire, was the chief cause of this change. To du Bayet he was all courtesy and he gave him an interesting summary of the situation. A little later, on the 20th May, another alteration of the districts changed his duties. The departments on the lower Seine, Seine-Inférieure and Eure, were taken from 'Cherbourg' and attached to Paris. 'Cherbourg's' district was to be the right bank of the Loire to Ingrandes with the departments of Mayenne, Sarthe, Orne, and Calvados, and it lost Manche,

<sup>1</sup> La Prévalaye is 4 kilometres from Rennes, in Ille-et-Vilaine.



which was given to Hoche, who now with 'Brest' had all the departments most likely to be used for a landing.

The olives of peace had but a short time to grow, and it matters little on whom the blame for the fresh outbreak of war be laid. However natural, possibly even right, might be the policy of keeping the armies watching their former foes, it was fatal to peace, for the Republicans could not look on unmoved whilst the Vendéans ruled the land and avenged former wrongs. Some of the Representatives, and of the Generals, Grouchy, for example, were anxious to enter the insurgent districts with troops, and were only waiting for increased forces which it was hoped that the approaching peace with Spain would enable the armies on the Pyrenees to furnish. The Chouans on the right bank of the Loire were active, and the arrests of their leaders began; Hoche to his satisfaction was ordered to seize Cormartin, and on the 1st June he was able to set his troops again in motion, showing, not very wisely, his own delight by an address to his army which began, 'Braves camarades, votre courage n'est plus enchaîné'. Next, on the left bank of the Loire, Charette, pushed, as Grouchy believed, by the violent measures of the Representative Gaudin, who had 'cassé les vitres', and urged by the Bourbons, broke the peace on the 25th June, all La Vendée was soon again in flame, and war raged once more on both banks of the Loire.

The Vendéans had expected help from England, and in July the English Navy landed a mass of *émigrés* at Quiberon. It fell to Hoche, in whose district Quiberon lay, to deal with this great effort of the Royalists, but he called for support from 'l'Ouest' and 'Cherbourg'. At this time Canclaux had fallen ill, perhaps partly from quarrels with Gaudin, who was denouncing him in the old revolutionary style, and Grouchy was acting as commander in his stead. Grouchy had already marched against a force which had landed in the peninsula of Ruis, but which took to its ships again. He at once answered the appeal of 'Brest', and hurried off reinforcements for that army: he would have gone with them had not the Representatives detained him on account of Canclaux's illness. His army was very weak, apparently only some 20,000, including those sent to Hoche. On the 21st July Hoche crushed the *émigrés* at Quiberon, capturing almost all of them. His success was due partly to the want of union amongst the Royalist leaders, and partly to the

foolish way in which French soldiers, prisoners of war in England, had been enlisted and placed in the ranks of the regiments nominally formed of *émigrés*. These men passed over to Hoche, bringing valuable information. Also Hoche was not unprepared, and both Ruis and Quiberon had as long before as the 24th January been pointed out by an engineer as likely places for a landing. It forms no part of my duty to describe the work done after Quiberon in slaughtering the *émigrés* taken prisoners there, for neither Grouchy nor any other future Marshal took part in it. Hoche, however, was concerned in it, and he is one of the leaders whose careers affect my tale. The *émigrés* declared that they had surrendered in virtue of a capitulation made with him and his men by which all their lives, except that of Puisaye, were to be saved. Hoche denied this, but it is hard to understand why, if his version is correct, the *émigrés* surrendered while they still had the chance of getting off to the English ships. They stopped the covering fire of these ships at Hoche's instigation, and their claim was acknowledged by the Republican grenadiers before the first court-martial assembled for their trial.<sup>1</sup> Hoche was in a most difficult position, from which he saved himself by leaving the executions to be carried out by General Lemoine. It is only fair to the Republicans to say that they went as far as they could, considering the violent decrees of the Convention, in saving most of the prisoners. Out of the 4,000 or 5,000 men taken only 748 were shot;<sup>2</sup> but the details of the executions do not form pleasant reading.<sup>3</sup> Grouchy had no share in this evil work, as I have said, but remained, on account of the continued illness of Canclaux, as busy in the field as at his office. He was much discontented with his position, complaining that his advice was not listened to by Canclaux, and rather alarmed lest he should be included in the denunciations of Gaudin against the

<sup>1</sup> See Chassin, *Pac.*, i. 560 with correction by Robert, 121 note. As to the English fire see Biré, 251.

<sup>2</sup> Closmadeuc, 567.

<sup>3</sup> For the Quiberon expedition in general see Chassin, *Pac.*, i. 448-521; Chassin, *Hoche à Quiberon*; Closmadeuc; Cuneo d'Ornano, i. 185-213 and ii. 145-67; Daudet, *Émigration*, i. 292-343; Moreau de Jonnes, 100-116; Rous-selin, i. 244-59 and ii. 180-200 with plan; Robert; *Tercier*; Thiers, *Rév.*, iii. 272-95; Savary, v. 175-81, 229-97, 336-9, 349-53; *Vict. et Conq.*, iv. 180-240; Forneron, ii. 99-134; Puisaye; Biré; James, i. 270-80; Alison, iii, Chap. XVIII, §§ 22-35 and xii, Chap. XCII, § 48.

For maps of Quiberon see Thiers, *Rév.*, Atlas V; Cuneo d'Ornano, *Croquis* X; *Vict. et Conq.*, iv. 180. For view of Fort Penthièvre see Robert, frontispiece.

commander. Still, he did justice to the purity of Canclaux's motives, and, when the time came for parting with him, remembered that he had found a second father in him. Advice he was still ready with and for some he was thanked by the *Comité*. In August the army had from 27,000 to 28,000 present under arms, after receiving a column of nominally 11,000 men from the 'Nord'. As Stofflet had not yet taken up arms again, Charette was the prominent leader on the left bank of the Loire, and was supposed to have about 18,000 infantry and 2,000 cavalry. We find him attacking with forces put by Grouchy at one time as from 8,000 to 12,000 infantry with 900 horse. His supplies were landed by the English, who were careful to provide him with red coats for his cavalry. Much of Grouchy's time was taken up in watching the coast, and when later, on the 2nd October, a Bourbon Prince at last came as if to lead the Vendéans, and the Comte d'Artois disembarked with a force on the Île d'Yeu, one great reason why the Prince, after long hesitation, sailed back for England was that Grouchy with a strong force of good soldiers was ready for him on the mainland.

Now came a change which led to Hoche's becoming the sole commander in La Vendée. The *Comité* had instructed the three commanders of the armies to confer together on future movements against the enemy, and on the 22nd August Hoche and Aubert du Bayet with two Representatives met at Nantes in Canclaux's sick-room. Grouchy submitted a statement of the position of the Armée de l'Ouest, with a plan for operations for which, later, he was praised and thanked by the *Comité*. It was becoming evident that united action was required; and, as 'Ouest' must be the principal force used against Charette, Aubert du Bayet and Hoche offered to serve under Canclaux. But Canclaux's health was bad, and at his wish it was finally determined that he should go to Paris to submit the plan of operations to the *Comité*, while Grouchy filled his place temporarily. Canclaux started for Saumur, where he was to meet Grouchy, but a decision of the *Comité*, of the 29th August, arrived before he handed over the command. It was doubtless the weakness displayed by Aubert du Bayet and the prestige Hoche had won by Quiberon that made the *Comité* now appoint the latter to command the chief force, 'Ouest'; Canclaux was to be employed in command of a new Armée du Midi, but his health prevented



him from serving any longer in the field. Aubert du Bayet was to remain in command of 'Cherbourg', whilst Moncey, who had been commanding the 'Pyrénées Occidentales', and who was set free by the peace with Spain, was to succeed Hoche with 'Brest', bringing with him a large part of his late army. The Generals, however, were not as submissive as formerly, and Moncey, like a wise man, preferred a local command in the South, leaving General Willot to conduct the reinforcements into La Vendée. Then the *Comité* nominated for 'Brest' Pérignon, who, after commanding 'Pyrénées Orientales' for some time, had been superseded by Schérer. He, however, preferred a seat in the Council of the *Cinq Cents*, so that Hoche continued to command 'Brest' along with his new charge 'Ouest', using General Rey as his lieutenant. 'Cherbourg' was also to send him 6,000 men. This gave Hoche the leading position in La Vendée, which he occupied till the close of the struggle there in 1796. Grouchy was to have gone to the Pyrenees, whether to bring back the reinforcements or to accompany those sent thence to 'Italie' does not appear, but, when Hoche represented how much he wanted him, he agreed to remain as Chief of the Staff.

Hoche set vigorously to work to crush the rebellion. Busy with his two armies, it must have been with indifference that on the 17th September he learnt that a certain General Bonaparte, who had been appointed to command the artillery of the Armée de l'Ouest, was retained in Paris by the *Comité*. Bonaparte was very wise not to accept either of the commands to which he was posted in La Vendée, that of the artillery or that of an infantry brigade, although his refusal caused him to be removed from employment for the moment, partly by mistake. Few men won credit in La Vendée, as Hoche complained. Still, if the future Emperor had had a short experience in this war, he might have gained a much-wanted lesson in the difficulties of dealing with an insurrection in a country where the peasants could use arms. Indeed, it is to be noted that in 1815 some of his troops that had worked against guerillas in Spain proved more difficult opponents for the Vendéans than those they had met before, whilst the officers and men from his regular army who were then fighting in the ranks of the insurrection, unaccustomed to the tactics of the rebels, gave them much trouble and hampered their movements. As for Bonaparte's choice of



Italy as his theatre, in less than eight months Hoche was writing to him, 'Honneur aux héros de Millesimo! Honneur au brave chef qui les commande!' And ever afterwards he was loud in praise of the commander of 'Italie'.<sup>1</sup>

Grouchy was now most actively employed, but it is hard to understand his position: he was constantly away from his commander, and one wonders who did the office work, for Grigny, his assistant, seems to have been with him. In the Marshal's memoirs he is represented as having acted as Chief of the Staff for 'Brest' as well as for 'Ouest', but this, I take it, is partly a mistake, for Hoche undoubtedly considered Chérin as his Chief of the Staff for 'Brest'.<sup>2</sup> Grouchy may indeed have transmitted Hoche's orders to 'Brest', but his active work was done with 'Ouest'. Chérin retained his post even while employed temporarily at Paris with a detachment from 'Brest' to help the Convention in the *coup d'état* that ended on the 13th Vendémiaire, the 'Jour des Sections'. He was recalled by Hoche afterwards. In October also arrived the reinforcement from 'Pyrénées Orientales', which, as I have said, had been ordered. Only 10,955 men started, and the battalions, passing through the districts where they had been raised, lost so heavily by desertion that but 4,000 arrived. By the time the first column reached Niort the first stress of Hoche's work was over. Hoche got rid of some of the Generals that came with this force, and he complained of the men. Of the two Generals of Division from Spain Dessein soon fell ill, and the senior, Willot,<sup>3</sup> became rather a thorn in Hoche's side. Here we may note another arrival in the West. Soon after Bonaparte's success at Vendémiaire his future Minister of Posts, Lavalette, came from Paris with his patron, General Baraguey d'Hilliers, who had been Chief of the Staff during that affair and had been dismissed after it, but again employed at Bonaparte's instance. He now became Chief of the Staff to the right division of 'Ouest' at Alençon. Later on, he was applied for by Bonaparte and with Lavalette reached Milan on the 5th August 1796.

<sup>1</sup> The question of Hoche's probable relations with Bonaparte in after years (if Hoche had lived) is discussed in Phipps, ii. 442-3. Hoche, on his death-bed, showed his suspicions of Bonaparte.

<sup>2</sup> Cuneo, ii. 171; Chassin, *Pac.*, ii. 60.

<sup>3</sup> Général Amédée Willot (1757-1823), Michaud, l. 596-601; Chassin, *Pac.*, ii. 156-60.

On the 3rd November Aubert du Bayet, who was commanding 'Cherbourg', became Minister of War, and, going to Paris, handed over his army temporarily to General Bonnaud, who had brought the draft from the 'Nord' in December 1794. Hoche at once wrote to the new Minister, asking that no troops should be withdrawn from him for a month, by which time the ever-hoped-for suppression of the revolt would have taken place, and Hoche would want a month's leave. Meantime he applied to be disembarrassed of the Armée des Côtes de Brest, for, absorbed as he was in the war on the left bank of the Loire, it was troublesome to have to manage another force on the right bank of the river through his lieutenant, Rey. Aubert du Bayet had a very high opinion of Pérignon and now offered him the command of 'Brest' and 'Cherbourg' united. This time Pérignon did not refuse but, when about to start, he was given the embassy to Spain.<sup>1</sup> The idea of uniting 'Brest' and 'Cherbourg' was then abandoned, and the Minister got his friend Grouchy nominated to command 'Brest'. He wrote to him in the most complimentary terms, acknowledging his devotion and his modesty but hoping that this time he would make use of the first quality alone. Grouchy, however, at once refused the post, alleging that love of his country overpowered his ambition; the war against the Chouans was a sore too deep and too difficult; hands more skilful than his alone could cure it. The Chouans were indeed even more difficult a foe than the Vendéans; the former often enough fought in the open, but the latter waged a hidden war of posts and night work, where a reputation could hardly be made, but might well be lost. If Hoche had not asked for relief, one might have thought that Grouchy feared a breach with him. Anyhow Aubert du Bayet gave way and 'Brest' was allotted to General Hédouville, who had been Chief of the Staff to Aubert du Bayet with 'Cherbourg', and whom we shall find himself in command in the West in 1797, and again later.

<sup>1</sup> See Dry, *Soldats-ambassadeurs sous le Directoire*, 2 vols., Paris, Plon, 1906 (vol. i. 102-4, 108). It is curious that no writer seems to give both nominations of Pérignon, first to 'Brest' and then to 'Brest' and 'Cherbourg', but the authorities I give for each seem clear.

## IV

### L'ARMÉE DES CÔTES DE L'OCÉAN AND L'ARMÉE D'IRLANDE

(December 1795 to January 1797)

Hoche and Grouchy. Hoche as 'Dictator in the West'. Second pacification. Expedition to Bantry Bay.

#### CONTEMPORARY EVENTS

1796 10th January–20th May. Armistice on the Rhine.

„ April to January 1797. Victories of Bonaparte in Italy. French advance into Germany and retreat thence.

FORTUNE was still in a gracious mood towards Grouchy, and was about to offer him a golden opportunity for gaining distinction; it was the best chance of his life, and its rejection was resented by the Goddess. In December 1795 the newly installed Directory called Hoche to Paris because they intended to trust him with an important mission which would prevent his returning to his Armée de l'Ouest. The biographer of Grouchy gives two inconsistent objects for this mission, first that it was for the repression of the Chouannerie in Brittany; and secondly, that, as the Minister is said to have told Grouchy, it was an expedition to Ireland. Neither of these seems to have been the real object, for, as to the Chouannerie, the question of welding the three armies into one had been settled in principle six days before, so that Hoche would practically have returned to his own army, and, as to the Irish expedition, Captain Desbrières makes no mention of any such plan at this period. Wild as most French governments were on the subject of overseas expeditions, the Directory would hardly have undertaken such a stroke until they had settled with La Vendée. Chassin is probably right in assuming that the mission was really the command of the Armée d'Italie, where Schérer was then hanging in the wind after gaining the battle of Loano. This is likely, because in the letters which now passed between Hoche and Grouchy there is no mention of any expedition to Ireland, which Grouchy would certainly have tried to join, but there is mention of Italy, to



which he wished to go if Hoche did so also. For whatever reason he was called up, Hoche started on the 17th December, having by order of the Directory left Willot in temporary command of the Armée de l'Ouest instead of Grouchy, the more obvious choice, as he was the senior. Arrived at the Capital, he either refused the offer of 'Italie', if that was really made, or else the Irish expedition, which he would certainly have liked to undertake, must have been found impracticable. Then the Directors consulted him on another plan. Chérin, while in Paris, had suggested the union of all the forces in the West under Hoche, his close friend. He had communicated this plan to Hoche, who, however unwilling he had been at one time to have two armies under him, now saw the advantage of one initiative, that is to say, against Chouans on the right, and Vendéans on the left, bank of the Loire, and he approved. He in person now laid his views of the situation before the Directors, who on the 26th December welded the three armies in the West into one, thus reverting to the organization of 1793. The three former armies became so many divisions, 'Ouest' that of the 'Sud', 'Brest' that of the 'Ouest', and 'Cherbourg' that of the 'Est'. The strength of the new army was nominally 182,956, but in reality it had some 100,000 men: it took the title of Armée des Côtes de l'Océan.

Early in January the Minister for War called his friend Grouchy to the Capital and made him Inspector-General of all the cavalry of the Armée des Alpes under Kellermann, and of the Armée d'Italie under Schérer. This did not suit Grouchy, for, unlike most officers, he had a hankering for the war in La Vendée, and he wrote to Hoche, asking for the command of the *division du Sud*. This was on the 29th February, but by that time Hoche had returned to the West, and did not receive the application. Annoyed at not receiving any reply, Grouchy wrote again in March, saying that he had accepted employment with 'Italie' but that he wished that the command of that army, just about to pass into the hands of Bonaparte, an unknown General, might fall to Hoche. Rather inconsistently with his first wish to remain in La Vendée, he now argued that Hoche might gather 'utiles lauriers' in Italy, whilst he would at best only reduce, not cure, the evil where he was. It is just possible that he may have known that Hoche early in March had, in a



fit of despondency, asked for leave, representing himself to Chérin as sick from ennui and disgust, whilst La Vendée was as far extinguished as any one could wish it to be. Hoche, in reply, said he did mean to leave La Vendée, but only to remain an observer of the high deeds of his masters and companions in arms: he had no idea of going to Italy. Writing in March 1796, just before the Armée d'Italie was to begin the swoop which ended near Vienna, he explained that the modern French had not, according to his view, the physical force given by virtue and sobriety, and could not go to the lands where the Gauls, their ancestors, had chased the masters of the world. He feared that the fields of Italy would again be drenched uselessly with the blood of his compatriots. Also he had personal reasons, for the character of the commander of an army should have some connexion with the climate in which he served. This, by the way, would not suit the English army, which has to serve everywhere, and in which a Wellington had to bear alike the heat of India and the cold which Spain can offer. Hot countries, however, did not suit Hoche's temperament, he said; besides, his 'politico-militaire' policy would be to remain on the defensive in Italy while the bulk of the forces should, he thought, be thrown on the Rhine. At the bottom of this there was, no doubt, resentment at his treatment when arrested at Nice in 1793, for he said that he knew what the journey to Nice was worth. All this is curious reading, especially when we remember that it was not only to Italy that Hoche objected: in the previous November, writing to his friend Debelle, then with the 'Rhin-et-Moselle' under Pichegru, he had said that he considered himself better off in 'my La Vendée' than on the other side of the Rhine.

It is not easy to understand Grouchy's exact relations with Hoche at this period, but some coolness must have arisen between them. The cause probably lay in the appointments to the welded army. Grouchy had some claim to be Chief of the Staff, but he saw Chérin preferred before him for the post, and Willot, his junior, passing over his head for the command of the *division du Sud*. Now Grouchy was very thin-skinned and apt to air his grievances in his correspondence, so that Chérin, who disliked him, probably had some ground for describing him as 'l'ancien ennemi de Hoche'. Grouchy and Hoche were hardly likely to be perfectly at ease with one another. One may have

the most democratic and revolutionary ideas, and still personally be a good deal of an aristocrat; and it is to be remarked that all Grouchy's best friends and 'second fathers', Canclaux, Aubert du Bayet, and Beurnonville, were officers of the *ancien régime*, doubtless with the same tastes and manners as Grouchy himself. Aubert du Bayet, indeed, is described by a true patriot as 'un ancien preux avec le ton et la galanterie qui régnaient dans nos salons avant la Révolution', never letting one forget the 'talon rouge'.<sup>1</sup> Now Hoche had been a private, and although, as we have seen, his language was not as gross as his writings often were, he may not always have been pleasant company for an officer who had ridden in the King's coaches. These, however, are but surmises: all we know is that a coldness did exist, and although Hoche took back Grouchy later for the expedition to Ireland, it may not have been easy to draw Generals from other armies for such a wild scheme. Meanwhile Grouchy, for very different reasons, had come to the same conclusion as Hoche, that Italy would be a fruitless field for laurels. It was all very well to go there when the army was commanded by the trustworthy old Schérer, who had ended the war with Spain at the head of 'Pyrénées Orientales', and who had won the battle of Loano with much credit, but when he saw that General recalled, and the army of Italy given to Bonaparte, 'un jeune homme qui avait aussi peu marqué', he preferred to go to the one totally inactive army, the 'Nord', as Chief of the Staff to Beurnonville. Then, when he found himself with what was but a large depot for the two Rhine armies, and when news from the 'jeune homme' began to come in, he repented, and yet more bitterly when the death of Stengel, the commander of Bonaparte's cavalry, showed that he would have succeeded to that post, for be it remembered that the cavalry was his proper arm.

None of the future Marshals were now in La Vendée, but Hoche's career has a certain interest for us. Chance had much to do with making him sole chief. As he wrote, eleven Commanders-in-Chief and one hundred and twenty other Generals had passed through this trial; and who had got any credit? He had one great merit: he grew, and in time understood the problem he had to solve. The policy of devastation and extermination was not his. He saw that the Vendean valued his

<sup>1</sup> *Mémoires de Laréveillière-Lépeaux*, 3 vols, Paris, Plon. (See i. 354.)

herds and his priests: why not let him have both? He himself went so far as to wish his own child to have a religion. Punish a priest as an individual and no one stirred. Execute him as a priest and he became a martyr: crowds surrounded the scaffold, and women and children dipped their handkerchiefs in the blood to serve as flags to fresh bands seeking Paradise by death in battle. Also Hoche had another great advantage over his predecessors, besides the unity of command. The Directory, weak as it might be in many matters, was a steadier master than the *Comité* or the Convention; more, the civil power no longer had to be consulted on every movement, and consequently there was more chance of secrecy. In fact Hoche was now what M. Chassin calls him, Dictator in the West, and he gradually crushed the insurgents by the steady pressure of his columns. What helped him greatly was the fact that even the short experience of the pacification had indisposed many to the continuance of the struggle, and the progress of the armies of the Republic on the Rhine and in Italy was such that belief in the ultimate success of the Vendéans' cause was waning. Stofflet, who had now risen again, was first taken and shot, and then Charette, who had never acted with him, was at last captured, and he also, after being led in barbarous triumph round Nantes, was executed. By the end of March 1796 the struggle in La Vendée, that is, on the left bank of the Loire, was ended, and Hoche, bringing 15,000 infantry and two cavalry regiments across the river, then turned all his weight on the Chouans, whose chiefs were either captured or came in, so that by May all the country on both banks was really pacified. Hoche wrote to the Directory that 'the war is finished' and that the priests had promised him to preach peace without intermission in the country. On the 13th July 1796 he sent in his long report on this termination of the struggle.

Triumphant as Hoche seemed, he had had to keep terms with the insurgents, who even now gained much for which they had fought. Their priests were not to be interfered with: a point on which Hoche most wisely insisted, although after his death many were deported. He had to be explicit that the conscription would not be enforced: 'Vos jeunes hommes restent avec vous', a point that had at one time been in doubt. Also he was almost strangely lenient towards the deserters from



the Republican ranks, who for long had formed the nucleus and the main strength of the Vendéans, and indeed more than two thousand men of these came in at once and were only held to serve again. The chiefs of the Chouans, at least, retained their arms. In consequence of this attitude, Hoche naturally incurred a good deal of odium; he was bitterly attacked in Paris, and his action was compared adversely with that of Willot. At one time the insurgents had succeeded in blinding three of the horses in his stable, hoping that he would mount one in ignorance and be killed, and an attempt was also made to shoot him. On the other hand, the Directory were lavish in well-earned praise: they styled him 'Pacificateur' of La Vendée, and ordered that he should be presented with two of their finest horses, completely equipped, besides a pair of pistols of Versailles manufacture. Here, however, the War Office stepped in, and, while Hoche was expecting to be presented with the gifts, possibly in public, he was told to his indignation that he must go to the Treasury and draw the money required to pay for the articles ordered from a saddler in Paris. This is the style so dear to 'Happy Warriors'. One touch of Nature makes all War Offices kin.

By decree of the 25th August the Directory ordered that Hoche's Armée des Côtes de l'Océan should cease to exist on the 22nd September, when the district was to pass under the ordinary law; but before that date a great part of the troops were on the march to join the Rhine armies and the army of Italy. It is a little difficult to tell the real numbers sent, and still more how many arrived, for the commanders in the interior of France often took on themselves to detain regiments passing through their districts; and Bonaparte constantly complained of this<sup>1</sup>. By the 13th July Hoche had sent 13,078 men for Italy, and he promised 4,400 more; while some 27,000 went to the Rhine. Altogether the army furnished 44,662 men for the frontiers, and 19,253 were set apart for an expedition to Ireland. Out of the total strength of 117,746, this left 53,831 troops still in the district, and this force was to be organized as the 'Quatre Divisions Réunies', with four Generals, each commanding one of the four military divisions which were to hold the district so

<sup>1</sup> See *Corr. Nap.* ii., pp. 16, 47, 282, 289. Only 3,400 men reached him by the 1st February 1797.



long fought over.<sup>1</sup> Hoche was to remain as Commander-in-Chief, with Hédouville as Chief of his Staff. By some change of feeling Hoche had applied for Grouchy, who on the 13th June had been ordered back from Holland to join him as commander of the troops in the island of Ré. Detained by the fever he had contracted in Holland, it was only in September 1796 that Grouchy took command of the 12th Military Division at Nantes, practically the division he had wished for in 1795. Although he at once found himself engaged in the old work of sending out columns through the 'pacified' country, he had really returned for an expedition under Hoche to Ireland. Not content with their difficulties on the Rhine and in Germany, the Directory was bent on throwing a force into England and Ireland. The very thought was dear to Hoche, who had the greatest animosity against the English. In his first service in the Gardes Françaises he doubtless had heard of the wars with the English, and the regiment must have remembered the 'blue bridge' which their bodies had formed across the Main in their flight after Dettingen. Also in 1793, in his own first active service, he had met the English at Dunkirk, and he longed to see Dublin and London, a wish which might easily have been granted, though in a way he did not intend. The first plan proposed by Carnot and warmly adopted by Hoche was simply disgraceful, if not diabolical, and shows how far the mind of the Republican hero fell below that of Bonaparte. A small body, a 'Légion des Francs', some 4,600 strong, formed of men of bad character, was to be thrown into Cornwall. Hoche did not mince matters as to what he expected from them. They could hope for nothing except much gold: as to the harm to be done to the English government, they could be trusted for that. 'Each of them knows what violations, plunderings, and assassinations have produced in our own country. What will it be in a foreign country?' Can one fancy Bonaparte at his worst writing such words? Nor was this all, for he hoped to raise amongst the galley-slaves at Brest another body for Wales. This was no passing thought: a second force of 600 men taken from all the prisons in his command with an

<sup>1</sup> 12th Div., Loire-Inférieure, Vendée, Deux-Sèvres, Charente-Inférieure, 13th Div., Morbihan, Finistère, Côtes-du-Nord, Ille-et-Vilaine. 14th Div., Calvados, Orne, Manche. 22nd Div., Mayenne, Sarthe, Loir-et-Cher, Maine-et-Loire, Indre-et-Loire; Sicotière, ii. 185 note.

equal number of 'galériens d'élite', still in fetters, was later on prepared by him for Bristol, and Bristol was to be so treated as to furnish an example for Liverpool, when the time came to ransom that town.

The idea of establishing a system of Chouannerie in England was soon abandoned, and then came the preparation for a regular invasion of Ireland. The history of this attempt is well and fully told by Captain Desbrière, and its chief interest to us is in the personal part taken in it by Grouchy, the only future Marshal concerned. Suffice it here to say that, after councils in which such diverse characters as Carnot, Clarke, Lacuée (all to be Ministers of Napoleon), and Wolfe Tone, the Irish leader, took part, the expedition was prepared. Hoche, the commander, was given according to the French system complete control over the navy as well as over the troops to be employed, and vexed his soul in overcoming what he considered almost the treason of the naval officers, but really was their preference for a great expedition to India, in which the landing of troops in Ireland was to be but an incident. At last on the 15th December 1796 Hoche sailed from Brest with 13,234 men, the main body of which, the *corps de bataille*, 2,972 strong, was under Grouchy. By an odd arrangement Chérin, the Chief of the Staff, was in a different vessel from that which carried Hoche. Except for the *cadres* of four foreign regiments, the men were all regular troops, no doubt good. At Hoche's wish the greater part was embarked on frigates and men-of-war, on account of the superiority in sailing of these vessels, but a few transports were used and were all captured by the English. Admiral Morard de Galles commanded the fleet. We may note that General of Brigade Humbert, who was soon to have his own Irish expedition, served with the *avant-garde*.

Losing one ship on the rocks, the expedition got safely out to sea without molestation. That night two English frigates made their appearance, and their signals and lights so puzzled the French fleet that it became dispersed. Next morning Grouchy in the *Immortalité* found that the squadron which carried his division was alone, and that the *Fraternité*, with Hoche and Morard de Galles on board, was missing. On the 19th two more squadrons joined, and Admiral Bouvet, as the senior present, took command of the fleet. On the 20th Grouchy consulted the

naval commanders, and most foolishly informed them that he had no instructions: he meant no special instructions, and indeed Hoche had provided for everything except his own separation from the fleet. However, Grouchy insisted that, in accordance with the known intentions of the government, Bouvet should proceed to Ireland and land the troops. Contrary winds delayed the fleet, and it was not till the evening of the 22nd December that Bouvet's squadron, fifteen vessels, anchored near Bere Island. To the ruin of the expedition, the other two squadrons remained outside Bantry Bay, from disinclination, as Grouchy believed, for the adventure. The next morning it was found that these two squadrons had disappeared. Bouvet proceeded to approach the land by perpetual tacking, and on the 24th the navy declared that it was possible to disembark the troops near Berehaven. All preparations were now made: Grouchy wrote his reports to the Directory and drew up a proclamation to the Irish, announcing that the French were come as allies, and swearing to respect their persons, property, and religion. 'Rely on republican faith, as on the valour of the soldiers of Liberty!' Hoche with his battalions of convicts behind him could not have spoken better.

Grouchy had 6,000 men with four field-guns, but no money and few arms or stores for the Irish allies. Yet he had a far larger force than that with which Humbert gave so much trouble in the next year. He himself seems to have been confident: his programme was to land on the 25th and march to Bantry on the 26th, where he would make his preparations for the advance. He hoped to take Kinsale on the 30th and to be before Cork by the 1st or 2nd January. If he succeeded in taking Cork, he would march on Dublin. If he could take neither Cork nor Dublin, or were checked, he would march for the Shannon and then towards the north of Ireland, whither he hoped the Directory would send arms and ammunition. The fable that Grouchy showed unwillingness to land, that the irritated Chérin thought of throwing him into the sea, and of then taking command and carrying out the scheme, appears to have no foundation whatever. We have the evidence of two good witnesses, to say no more, on that point; first that of Chérin, who in all probability had no goodwill towards Grouchy at that time; and secondly that of Wolfe Tone, who was naturally



in a fever to land. Neither would have forgiven Grouchy, if he had ruined the expedition, nor had either any motive for silence on his mistakes. Chérin in his journal says that Grouchy, on board the *Immortalité*, declared to him in the presence of two officers that he adhered with enthusiasm to the plan of disembarking, that his decision was made, and that, however dangerous might be the results, he considered it part of his duty and due to the honour of the Republic to operate at once. Admiral Bouvet, says Chérin, was informed of this, and demanded and received a written requisition to carry out the disembarkation. Wolfe Tone's account agrees with Chérin's. The moment the staff, he says, gave Grouchy their opinion that the landing should be carried out, Grouchy took his part 'like a man of spirit'. Bouvet, who lost his rank by his conduct, would have been only too happy to rely on Grouchy's opinion, but he does not appear to have alleged that Grouchy was unwilling to land. Grouchy would indeed have been a fool or a madman if he had refused to land and had returned to France of his own free will. In face of the inevitable attacks of the army on his conduct he could not have expected to retain his rank, even if he retained his head. Could he have acted otherwise than as he did? It is quite true that it might have been possible to land at least some part of the troops on the 24th and thus to compromise the fleet so deeply that Bouvet would not have been able to do what Chérin says he was anxious to do, that is to say to escape. But on such points a landsman must trust to the navy, and, from Bouvet's conduct there is every reason to suppose that he was not assisting Grouchy in good faith. Further, Grouchy had to remember that the *Fraternité* might appear, and that Hoche might object to carrying out the plan with only a part of the force. It was thus natural that Grouchy, without losing any fair opportunity, should not have unduly pressed on the landing, and it was also natural that he should be disinclined, as any General would be, to place a small part of his command alone on shore. There was nothing to blame in his conduct.

On the night of the 24th the wind rose and continued the next day. About five o'clock on the afternoon of the 25th Grouchy was on deck, when Bouvet suddenly appeared and, without speaking to the General, gave the order to fire the signal to cut cables and run. As he passed the other vessels he

shouted the same orders to them, and from that moment he made straight for Brest. The indignant Grouchy tried to get him to return or to make for the Shannon, and, when this failed, he shut himself up in his cabin to avoid meeting the Admiral. On the 1st January 1797 this part of the fleet was back at Brest. The best proof of the precipitate and unnecessary haste of Admiral Bouvet is seen, not only from his own entries in his journal (from which it is evident that he took but little care to warn the other vessels to get under weigh) but also from the fact that, although some ships followed him then and on the following days, twelve vessels remained till the 27th December in Bantry Bay. On them were Chérin and about 4,000 men. Even then the Generals seem to have been almost willing to land, but again the navy interfered. Captain Bedout, the senior naval officer, feared a fresh storm, and the weather soon proved that he was right. The ships cut their cables and stood out, and most of them got safely back to Brest.

On the 14th January 1797 the Commander-in-Chief of the expedition, Hoche, landed at Rochelle and set off for Paris to recount his adventures. Losing sight of the fleet and encountering bad weather, Hoche had not reached Bantry Bay till the 31st December. That portion of the expedition which had not followed Grouchy had then left, and Hoche could but return. Still, as Captain James says, 'between the 20th December 1796 and the 6th January 1797 French ships had been at anchor in Bantry Bay for seventeen consecutive days with the single exception of the 28th, without the English cruisers having put the least obstacle', so that 14,400 men could have been landed. It is part of the strange fortunes of this expedition that, whilst two English fleets were on the watch for it, the principal losses sustained by it in captures 'arose from the diligence and activity of a 64 gun ship and four or five frigates, part of which on the 29th December were lying in the harbour of Cork'.<sup>1</sup> Of forty-four vessels of all sorts which had sailed, seven, including four transports and powder ships, were captured, four were wrecked, and two foundered. Not a single ship was captured by the two English fleets looking for them: this too while the ships of the expedition had been traversing in every direction the English and Irish Channels during three or four weeks.

<sup>1</sup> James, ii. 22, 23, 25.

Hoche, returning in all the bitterness of such a ludicrous mishap, was naturally angry when he found that Grouchy had put part of the failure to land on the ground that he had not known the whole of Hoche's scheme and had not received instructions, and that the thread of Hoche's intelligence with the rebels in Ireland was not in his hands. He had, Hoche told the Directory, the secret order addressed to the Generals, with an excellent plan of Ireland. Also the Chief of the Staff, Chérin, was in the Bay. Grouchy declared that Rear-Admiral Bouvet had sailed contrary to his wish, and suggested to Hoche that nothing short of throwing Bouvet overboard could have saved the situation. The curious thing is that no formal charge was made against Grouchy, although Hoche complained of him, but apparently more of his statement about want of instructions than of his conduct. The Directory were probably not anxious to be severe, for just before Hoche sailed they had come to understand their mistake in sending him, and the troops so badly wanted on the Rhine frontier, away on such a dangerous expedition; and they had actually tried to stop his sailing. Chérin excited Hoche against Grouchy, whom he described as the old enemy of the General, and Hoche was estranged from Grouchy for some time. However, some one had to be punished. Hoche put Chérin in arrest for publishing an order to the army during his absence at sea, and the Directory dismissed Rear-Admiral Bouvet.<sup>1</sup>

Hoche, as I have said, went to Paris as soon as he returned from the Irish coast, leaving the charge of his army under the new Chief of the Staff, Hédouville, who, I take it, had informally replaced Hoche during the expedition. Grouchy, on his part, as soon as he had landed, had prepared to start again, but he suggested that this time Connaught, not Munster, should be the objective. The Directory, however, as soon as they found Hoche was safe, turned their attention elsewhere. Hoche was now free for fresh work. He seems to have realized how little chance he had in his hopes of invading England, at least for the moment, and on the 24th January 1797 he was given the command of

<sup>1</sup> For this expedition to Ireland see Desbrière, i. 57-69, 135-232; Chevalier, i. 262-316; Grouchy, i. 258-405; Cuneo D'Ornano, i. 259-82 and ii. 313, 334; Guillon, 274-83; James, i. 1-25; Chassin, *Pac.*, ii. 613-20; Barras, ii. 264-8; Moreau de Jonnes, 220-46; Mahan, i. 335-68.



the 'Sambre-et-Meuse'. Grouchy had thought of going to the Rhine again while Beurnonville was in command, but his broil with Hoche made him abandon this idea, and he returned to the command of his 12th Division at Nantes, whilst Hédouville, not he, replaced Hoche in command of the 'Quatre Divisions Réunies'. Practically this was another slight on Grouchy, the senior of the two, who had had much more experience in the West.

Here I leave the history of the forces in the West under the Republic. The story of this long war has never been adequately told, at least for English readers, and Chassin's great work, and even that of Savary, contain much matter that makes it difficult to follow the story continuously. Bonaparte, and most other officers, shrank from taking part in this war, and, although Grouchy was one of the many officers who disapproved of the plundering and indiscipline, his willingness to remain in the West is not an agreeable trait in his character. Considering the large number of troops which served in La Vendée, a great proportion of the French army must have received a bad training. The guerilla war was no preparation for real campaigns: Bonaparte remarked that officers coming from La Vendée were not accustomed to the 'grande guerre', nor were the men, but they 's'aguerrissent';<sup>1</sup> and Hoche approved when one General of Division preferred to resign rather than serve on the frontiers, after being accustomed only to a 'guerre purement politique'. He was certainly right, for the General, Antoine Rey, of whom he thought well, and whom he placed in command of the *division du Sud*, nearly ruined Bonaparte at Rivoli.<sup>2</sup>

Still, we may believe that the better class of officers who had served here carried away some useful lessons. Berthier and Davout were probably confirmed in a love for order, regularity, and discipline, and may have respected Bonaparte the more for getting France out of the bloody welter of which they had here seen a sample. Augereau, on the other hand, who had an unpleasant and suspicious connexion with the worst side of the armies, seems to have learnt that bluster told, and that it was

<sup>1</sup> *Corr. Nap.*, ii. 47.

<sup>2</sup> Général Antoine-Gabriel-Venance Rey (1768-1836). See Chassin, *Vend. Pat.*, ii. 572-4, and *Biog. des Contemporains*, iv. 1091-2, which confuses him with Général Baron Louis-Emmanuel Rey, who defended San Sebastian.

well to look to Paris for promotion: an experience which he applied in the Pyrenees. As for Grouchy, his case supports my view that the characters of most of the Marshals were fixed by the time they obtained divisional rank, for throughout his life we find him still thin-skinned, complaining, and exhibiting the same timidity in assuming responsibility and the same shrinking from independent command that he was to show with fatal effect in 1815. Also, although his hands were now and always clean, one remarks that it was he, a General from La Vendée, who was employed in the rather dirty work of turning the King of Sardinia out of Piedmont in 1798 and in suppressing the consequent insurrections there in 1799. As for Hoche, it is not quite easy to understand his preference for a field where, as he said, but small credit was likely to be obtained. It is true that during 1794-5 Jourdan and Hoche's old enemy, Pichegru, were commanding on the Rhine, so that there may not have been room for him, even when in 1795-6 Moreau replaced Pichegru. Still, the Armée du Nord was probably open to him, and apparently he could have had 'Italie', had he not been prejudiced against the theatre in which that army had to operate. Notwithstanding some angry outbursts and passing fits of disgust, he seems never really to have wished to leave La Vendée. His conduct towards the captured *émigrés* after Quiberon casts a certain shade on him, although he could not have saved them, or even attempted to do so without running great risks himself. He was certainly not cruel, and he rebuked an officer who professed readiness to exterminate 'quelques mutins' whenever Hoche should desire it. The great point in his favour is that, as I have said, he obviously grew in character, and by commanding learnt moderation, except of course towards England, whose aid to the insurgents, however desultory, had been a thorn in his side. One important difference may be noted between this theatre of war and those of the northern and eastern armies. Here, whatever the antipathies, follies, and mistakes of the *Représentants-en-mission* might be, their action was not so injurious as in the North and East, and on the whole they were ready to support good commanders, such as Aubert du Bayet, Berthier, Canclaux, Grouchy, Kléber, and Marceau, while they disapproved of the appointment of Rossignol and Léchelle.

A student might be worse employed than in giving us a complete account of the share of the English in this struggle. Of course it took some time for them to understand the situation and its full possibilities. The Channel Islands became naturally a convenient base by which the Royalists could communicate with the Princes and, in time, with the English government. The insurgents suffered from want of a supreme head, and, well as each of them knew his own district, they did not know the whole theatre. Had, for instance, the great column which crossed the Loire made for Cherbourg, they would have at once been in possession of a port from which they could have communicated at ease with England, for the place was open on the land side. Then the English brought the great expedition, some 6,500 strong, to Quiberon, and when that stroke failed, they landed the Comte d'Artois with another force at the island of Yeu. Why did not the Prince land, as he had the opportunity of doing, in the district held by Charette? From pure cowardice (as the infuriated Charette told Louis XVIII), which ruined everything? It would be fairer to say that the Bourbon was no Stuart, to throw himself on land with seven men at his right hand 'to win him Kingdoms three', let alone one. The advisers of the Comte d'Artois thought that he should have a mass of troops to command, just as in 1815 the Duc de Bourbon, sent into this district, considered 'that the wandering and vagabond life which I (D'Andigné) proposed to him was not proper for a Prince of the Blood',<sup>1</sup> a resolution he adhered to, although reminded of the examples of Gustavus Vasa and of the Scottish Pretender. The Comte d'Artois returned to England 'and bade the rest keep fighting' in 1795 just as the Duc de Bourbon was to do in 1815. After all, our Stuarts were men, and the Bourbons?

Hoche, who knew his work, was not afraid of landings, which he thought he could crush, as he actually did that at Quiberon, but he probably underestimated the effect of the necessary concentration on the districts that would have had to be abandoned. In them the story of Spain might have been anticipated. Even as it was, the English landed stores, arms, and powder. Gunpowder, by the way, the Vendéans contrived to manufacture and of such a quality that the Republicans at

<sup>1</sup> See the parting instructions of the Comte d'Artois, Chassin, *Pac.*, ii. 202, and for the Duc de Bourbon, *D'Andigné*, ii. 215, 217.



least once mistook it for the English gunpowder, which they owned was better than that of the Republic. In 1815 these supplies were begun afresh and continued even after Waterloo: the Armée Royale of Morbihan, says d'Andigné, was completely armed, 'the English fleet having furnished it with arms and ammunition in abundance'. Desultory as was much of this help, it yet encouraged the insurgents, and drove to frenzy so excitable a man as Hoche, watching the coast for each new landing: never could he tell where the blow would fall, nor come to grips with the masters of the sea.



THE ARMIES ON  
THE SOUTHERN FRONTIERS



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## V

# L'ARMÉE DU MIDI, L'ARMÉE DES ALPES, AND L'ARMÉE D'ITALIE

(April 1792 to July 1793)

Characteristics of the armies in the South. Occupation of Savoy and Nice. Kellermann suspected. Masséna, Sérurier, and Victor.

### CONTEMPORARY EVENTS

- 1792    20th April. War with Austria declared.
- 21st September. Abolition of the Monarchy.
- 20th September. Battle of Valmy.
- 6th November. Battle of Jemappes.
- 1793    1st February. War with England and Holland declared.
- 9th March. War with Spain declared.
- 10th March. Rising in the west of France.
- 22nd March. War with the Empire declared.
- 6th April. Comité de Salut public established.
- April to May. Successes of the Vendéans.
- May. Spanish armies enter France.
- July. Surrender of Mayence and Valenciennes.

THE commencement of the long wars of the Revolution found France provided with three armies facing the northern and north-eastern frontiers, but with no adequate defence in the South. Here, from the Alps to the Pyrenees, there was danger, for on the one side Sardinia, and on the other Spain, might enter the coalition formed by Austria and Prussia, while Austria herself could act through Italy. Accordingly on the 13th April 1792 an Armée du Midi was decreed. Originally a mere *corps d'observation*, it soon developed into a whole group of armies, the members of which were gradually re-welded into one, the famous Armée d'Italie. These armies operated with but little reference to those in the North and East. To their ranks for the most part came the hot-headed, full-blooded men of the South, but the main difference between them and the other armies of the Republic lay in their organization. The Armées du Nord, du Centre, and du Rhin had gathered round cores, but 'Midi' had no such advantage. Starting with a strength of twenty-two battalions of regular infantry and twenty-seven of

volunteers, the army was increased mainly, if not entirely, by volunteer battalions. The proportion of trained officers was therefore small. Add to this the fact that it was necessary to improvise a staff, and it will be seen that the opportunities for the rise of fresh men were greater in the South than in the North or on the Rhine.

Another peculiarity of the southern theatre was the violent hostility to the Revolution shown by a great part of the population. Whether or not the mass of the nation was ever really in favour of the Revolution, there is no doubt that the South was not, and the commanders on the frontier threw many an anxious glance towards the large towns behind them, such as Lyons, Marseilles, and the arsenal of Toulon, where they had been obliged to leave the troops they so much needed at the front.

At first the district assigned to the Armée du Midi stretched from the Lake of Geneva to Bordeaux, and included the town of Lyons. Dumouriez, while Minister for War, had a desire for the command, and it is curious to reflect on what his daring might have accomplished in this theatre. The General chosen for the post, however, was the Marquis de Montesquiou-Fezensac,<sup>1</sup> an officer of the old army, who was commanding a division in Lafayette's army, the 'Centre'. He was a friend of Lafayette; he had told Servan, who was shortly to become Minister for War, that he disapproved of the attack on the Tuileries, that he did not recognize the authority of the Assembly, and that he would serve France, but not a faction. He had been ordered to send twenty battalions to the Armée du Rhin and had replied that, if he did so, peace must be bought from the Sardinians; finally he was unfortunate enough to have under him at Lyons the extraordinary 'Jacobin Prince', Charles de Hesse, by whom he was continually harassed, disobeyed, and denounced. It was, then, natural that Montesquiou should be called to Paris to explain his conduct. He succeeded in clearing himself, and even obtained authority to requisition the *compagnies d'élite* of the National Guard for his army. In August came another summons to the Capital, but by now he had collected 25,000 men and he boldly submitted plans for the invasion of Savoy and

<sup>1</sup> Anne-Pierre, Marquis de Montesquiou-Fezensac (1739-98), Michaud, xxix. 523-5.



Nice. A victory in the South, he declared, would balance any reverse in the North; and indeed at this moment Brunswick's advance into France was in full progress. Montesquiou's proposal was too tempting to be rejected, and the *Conseil exécutif* authorized the operation. The Sardinians could not bring more than 10,000 or 12,000 men against Montesquiou's force of thirty-three battalions, eleven squadrons, and some National Guards: no declaration of war was made, but the construction of some trenches by the Sardinians was taken as a pretext for hostilities, and on the night of the 21st September (the day after Valmy), the advance was begun. Hardly any resistance was met with, and on the 24th September Montesquiou entered Chambéry. Meantime the *division du Var*, some 10,000 men under General d'Anselme, passed the Var on the 29th September, supported from the sea by a French squadron, and with equal ease occupied Nice.

Although successful, both Generals soon lost their commands. At the moment when he was planting a tree of Liberty and watching the defile of eleven guns taken from the enemy, Montesquiou learnt that the Convention had unanimously dismissed him on account of the most unfounded accusations: for example, he who had urged the invasion was charged with slowness in the execution of the plan. He defended himself, but wrote that a General once publicly distrusted could not remain in command, and he asked for permission to retire. However, three commissioners sent by the Convention reported in his favour, and the decree of dismissal was cancelled, though only, as it turned out, for a time.

By now it had become obvious that the Spanish frontier could no longer be neglected, and that it was therefore impossible to keep all the forces in the South under one command. On the 1st October 'Midi' was separated into two bodies: the forces acting under Montesquiou and d'Anselme became the *Armée des Alpes*, while the troops on the Spanish frontier became the *Armée des Pyrénées*. Next d'Anselme's force at Nice was made a separate command, and on the 7th November received the title of *Armée d'Italie*, though it was sometimes called the *Armée du Var*. Meanwhile Swiss troops had occupied Geneva, then an independent Republic, and the Convention, choosing to consider this action as a menace, ordered Montesquiou to expel the



foreign garrison. On the 6th October he went to Carouge and took command of a body of some 6,000 men whom he had collected in order to menace the town, and who were described to the historian Gibbon, then in Lausanne, as 'a black, daring, desperate crew of buccaneers, shocking rather than contemptible'. Montesquiou, Gibbon thought, was holding the wolf by the ears, for the men were beginning to suspect, and even to accuse, their General, and were crying aloud for blood and plunder. Montesquiou, however, already weakened by the formation of the Armée des Pyrénées, knew that he had not strength sufficient to attack the State of Geneva, which could have brought 20,000 men into action, and eventually he was permitted by the Convention to negotiate a treaty by which Geneva was to be evacuated by the foreign troops. But his own force remained a menace to the town, and it was with some alarm that the Necker family, sitting one night in their drawing-room at Rolle, saw the door fly open, and heard their servant announce, 'M. le général de Montesquiou!'

He had come as a fugitive. The treaty he had obtained was so favourable that the Convention could not annul it, but he had, says Gibbon, 'acted with politeness, moderation, and apparent sincerity', which by itself was sufficient to upset Republican administrators, and on the 9th November the Convention decreed that he was 'accused'; of imaginary crimes, indeed, including that of having compromised the honour of the Republic by his treaty. On the 13th November, some hours before the courier could arrive, Montesquiou received private warning that he would be arrested, and he determined to emigrate. He mounted his horse, galloped through Geneva, and took boat for Coppet, whence he retired farther from the frontier. His foe, Hesse, regretted that he could not have been impaled on a constitutional pike. Montesquiou was fortunate enough to be struck off the list of *émigrés* on the 3rd September 1795, and he returned to Paris, where he died on the 30th December 1798. D'Anselme lasted a little longer in his command, but was disgraced on the 16th December 1792, as will be seen under 'Italie'.

One of d'Anselme's battalions, the 2nd Var, was commanded by Lieut.-Colonel André Masséna, who now, after an absence of fifteen years, retrod his native soil. He had been born at Nice

in 1758, but had enlisted in the French regiment 'Royal-Italien' and had by 1784 risen to the rank of *adjudant sous-officier*. Further promotion, he judged, was unlikely, because his Colonel's praises made the officers of the regiment jealous of him, and in 1789 he left the service. When the volunteer battalions were formed, he was chosen as *adjudant-major* to the 2nd Var, and on the 1st February 1792 he was elected Lieut.-Colonel of the battalion by 431 votes out of 463. Of other future Marshals in the Armée du Midi, Colonel Sérurier, commanding the regular regiment 'Médoc' was in the Nice force. Moncey, whom we shall soon meet, was far away on the southwestern frontier, and Lieut.-Colonel Pérignon was at Auch, organizing the 'Légion des Pyrénées'. The volunteer battalion in which Lieut.-Colonel Suchet served was probably being organized in rear, as that of Lieut.-Colonel Victor certainly was, although it joined in the middle of October. *Sous-lieutenant* Lannes was in the camp de Miral, near Toulouse. General of Brigade Grouchy was apparently with Montesquiou, employed with the cavalry, but he was a mere bird of passage in the South. Of these men Masséna, Lannes, Pérignon, and Suchet had been born in the South, and so naturally entered southern volunteer corps: the rest, like Bonaparte himself, owed their connexions with these armies simply to the fact that their units were quartered in the South.

As to the names given to the new armies that sprang from 'Midi' there is much confusion. The 'Alpes' for a period changed its name to 'Armée de Savoie'; the Armée des Pyrénées on the 30th April 1793 was divided into two bodies, 'Pyrénées Occidentales' and 'Pyrénées Orientales'; the title 'Armée du Midi' did not disappear, but was applied at times to small forces in the South which can be looked on as merely local commands. But the reader will practically lose nothing if he takes the Armée du Midi as being at once broken up into the four armies amongst whom its forces were soon divided—'Alpes', 'Italie', 'Pyrénées Occidentales', and 'Pyrénées Orientales'. Of these, the two on the Spanish frontier finished their existence in 1795, when the others, at least the Armée d'Italie, were just beginning their real career. On the other hand, the first year of 'Italie's' existence had its effect on the war in the Pyrenees, for it was the General and the reinforcements set free by the taking of Toulon that

brought 'Pyrénées Orientales' into Spain. Now 'Italie' and 'Alpes' were sister armies: the success or defeat of the one affected the other. It will therefore be best from a chronological point of view to commence with the early history of 'Alpes' and 'Italie', then to turn to the two armies of the Pyrenees, and finally to come back to 'Alpes' and 'Italie' and to carry these armies as far as the early spring of 1796.

The Armée des Alpes was for long commanded by Kellermann, and Grouchy, Marmont, Berthier, and Bonaparte each served in it, but the part it took in the war was unimportant, except for the first year or so of its existence, when it was employed mostly in the suppression of troubles in the interior. I can, therefore, deal with it comparatively briefly, confining myself as far as possible to the adventures of Kellermann, who was at its head on its formation and at its dissolution. As a rule the army undertook no important offensive operations, but clung to Chambéry and the mountains. When the Armée d'Italie swept into the plains of Lombardy in 1796 it cleared the front of 'Alpes', which thenceforward became a mere depot for Bonaparte's army.

In December 1792 Kellermann joined the army at Chambéry and took over the command from d'Ornac, who had acted temporarily since the flight of Montesquiou. He found the Armée des Alpes weak, badly clothed and armed, and ill-fed. Having sent troops to the Armée des Pyrénées, it had only five regiments of the Line and thirty volunteer battalions, half of which was of the new and bad levy. It had two cavalry regiments and, including some *compagnies franches*, two legions in process of formation, and various other corps; it was nominally 30,000 strong, though really it had only from 16,000 to 20,000 men. By the 1st May 1793 it had risen to more than 45,000, but there was great difficulty in arming such a force. The troops were in cantonments, for in this district the snow stopped all operations for some six months in each year and, after Montesquiou's conquest, the army had been placed in Savoy and in the valleys of the Isère and of the Rhône, covered by a line of posts. A detachment was in the Faucigny (the upper part of which is now better known as the valley of Chamonix), carrying the left of the army to near Geneva, and being nominally covered itself by the neutrality of Switzerland. Thence the line



to be protected ran along the crests of the Alps by Mont Blanc, the Little Saint-Bernard, Mont Cenis, Mont Genève, and Monte Viso, to Barcelonnette. Here the right rested in occupation of the crest whence the rivers Tinée, Var, and Verdon rise. The main valleys in the district were that of the Isère, the upper part of which, running past Moûtiers up to Séez at the foot of the Little Saint-Bernard, is called the Tarentaise; the valley of the Arc (or the Maurienne), joining the Isère above Montmélian and running past Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne, Modane, and Lanslebourg to the foot of Mont Cenis; the valley of the Durance, running past Embrun and Mont Dauphin, up to Briançon and Mont Genève; finally the valley of the Ubaye, joining the Durance below Embrun and running past Barcelonnette and the Camp de Tournoux. This camp, which is so constantly mentioned at this period, was cut in the rock, and closed both the pass of Monte Viso and the pass of the Col de l'Argentière (also called Colle della Maddalena, Col de la Madeleine, or Col de Larche).<sup>1</sup> The Barcelonnette valley and the Department of the Basses-Alpes were transferred from the district of 'Italie' to that of 'Alpes' in August 1793 by agreement between the commanders.

At this period the commanders of 'Alpes' and 'Italie' lived in the atmosphere of suspicion and jealousy that prevailed in every army. Thus Pierre Chépy, political agent and National Commissioner, joined 'Alpes' convinced that Kellermann was a bungler with Royalist tendencies, and that his thoughts were chiefly occupied by his digestion. In time he had to acknowledge the General's vigour and his success with his troops, but to Chépy there seemed to be danger in these qualities, for might he not gain too firm a hold on his men? Accordingly he suggested that Kellermann's talents and reputation might be used with advantage on the northern frontier, and he turned his wrath on the staff, with the usual cry of the Commissioners that it was bad, not indeed from military inefficiency (although the upsetting of the whole army had made it difficult to get good staff officers) but from supposed lack of patriotism. It would be a pity to spoil by any comment one of Chépy's proposals for the

<sup>1</sup> Special maps of the Little Saint-Bernard, Mont Cenis, and Mont Genève will be found in the second volume of Krebs and Moris; and for the Argentière in the first volume. The general map of the district, given in the second volume, is sufficient for the purpose of this work.



better government of the army, 'Order that every General condemned to death' (as he assumed that some of those malefactors must be) 'shall be executed in the midst of the army he may have betrayed, that his body shall be hung by its heels on the territory of the enemy, with the inscription, "This monster sold himself to the enemies of the country. The vengeance of the French people, which has taken his head, abandons his remains to birds of prey and to tyrants".' Such is the proposal gravely submitted to the Minister for Foreign Affairs by the political agent with 'Alpes'.

One awkward question, the difficulty with Geneva, had to be got rid of: Kellermann saw the Swiss authorities at Geneva and found they had no intention of invading France, as the *Conseil* had imagined, but only wished to retain their own liberty in peace. He was therefore free from the rock that had wrecked Montesquiou, and able to devote his attention to his army. We find Grouchy in command of a brigade at Annecy and, characteristically enough, writing to the Convention his criticisms on the operations of his late commander, who, he thought, might have reached Turin if he had been sufficiently enterprising. He also reflected on the contracts made by Montesquiou. According to the nature of such men, he was, while calumniating his chief, equally surprised and hurt on finding that he himself, a true patriot, was denounced as an *émigré*. However, he left almost immediately for La Vendée.

Between 'Alpes' and the sea lay the sister force. Of all the armies of the Republic, that which was to win the greatest fame started from the humblest origin. It was a mere division of the Armée du Midi, the *Division du Var*, then in occupation of Nice, that on the 7th November 1792 received the title of Armée d'Italie, and even after that date it was still sometimes called the Armée du Var. To this army I attribute, perhaps with doubtful accuracy, the capture of Toulon. Afterwards it lay famine-stricken along the Riviera. On the conclusion of peace with Spain in July 1795 it received most of the troops of the 'Pyrénées Orientales', and in March 1796, by this time a well-tuned instrument, it passed under Bonaparte. Then, with a commander, with Generals, and with troops that all knew well the ground they were to work over, it burst into Italy and soon became the best paid force of the Republic. It gradually

drained the Armée des Alpes of all its strength: it was largely reinforced from La Vendée. In 1797, after a long struggle, it won Mantua and almost saw Vienna. Here its course ended, but, after being broken up for the formation of the Armée d'Angleterre, it lived again in the Armée de l'Orient, which captured Egypt and was not far from reaching Constantinople. With the return of its troops to France in 1801 its second existence came to an end. As for the Armée d'Italie of 1798-9, that indeed was a very different body, although it did contain some troops of the original 'Italie', but, if we are to connect the two armies, then we may say that the Armée d'Italie ended as it had begun, starving along the Riviera.

Of the future Marshals that served with 'Italie' in the early years we have already spoken of Masséna's early history. Those of Sérurier, Victor, and Suchet must now be touched on. Jean-Mathieu-Philibert Sérurier, born at Laon on the 8th December 1742, was the son of Mathieu-Guillaume Sérurier, who had held the modest post of mole-catcher to the breeding stud of the King, but this, I presume, was some nominal post, for he was Seigneur de Sort, and from 1750 Seigneur de Saint-Gobert. The family belonged to the *petite noblesse provinciale* and was one of those which frequently supplied officers to the old Royal army. Well educated and of so austere a character that it was believed he would become a priest, on the 25th March 1755 he obtained a commission as Lieutenant in the militia battalion of Laon, where he served under his uncle, the Commandant of the corps. On the 12th June 1758 he went into another militia battalion, that of Soissons, but when it was determined to send the Laon battalion with fourteen others of the militia to the lower Rhine, to take part in the Seven Years War, he returned to his first corps on the 30th November 1758. In the campaign of 1759 he received a bayonet wound. On the 1st October he passed as ensign into the regular regiment of infantry 'Mazarin', which had suffered so heavily at Minden that but little was left of it. On the 31st July 1760 the regiment formed part of the reserve of the left, under Du Muy, which Prince Ferdinand surprised near Warburg, and here, defending the key of the position, Sérurier fell, struck on the right of his face by a musket-ball, which broke his jaw and left a permanent scar. On the 25th April 1762 he became Lieutenant, and went with his regiment to

Bayonne, where a force had been collected under the Prince de Beauvau for a campaign, in conjunction with Spain, against Portugal. On the 3rd June this body entered Navarre, and Sérurier was with the first battalion of his regiment at the siege of Almeida, which was taken on the 25th August 1762. In November of that year the force returned to France, and after the peace, the regiment which since the 1st December 1762 had been known as La Tour du Pin, after its new Colonel, became the Régiment de Beauce. After the peace of Paris in 1763 came large reductions, and Sérurier fell from *lieutenant* to *sous-lieutenant*, his retention being due to his wound. The note on him by the Marquis de Ségur, the Inspector General of infantry, was 'point de condition, mais sujet d'espérance'. For six years he was drill instructor, becoming *lieutenant* again on the 21st February 1767. The changes of quarters of the Régiment de Beauce can be found in Susane, but only one is interesting. In October 1770 Sérurier went with 'Beauce' to Corsica, which had been ceded to France by Genoa in 1764, but the Corsicans, under Paoli, were resisting the French occupation. When Sérurier landed in the island Charles Bonaparte had submitted to the invaders, and his fourth child, Napoléon, was some fourteen months old. The regiment was only engaged in small affairs with the insurgents. After this expedition promotion was slow, and, though Sérurier was reported on favourably as a 'good officer, full of zeal and good will' in 1774, 'excellent officer' in 1775, it was only on the 28th February 1778 that he became first Lieutenant, and on the 28th February 1778 second Captain. This enabled him to marry on the 3rd July, Louis-Marie-Madeleine Itasse, daughter of the Registrar of the 'baillage criminel' of his native town, Laon. On the 29th July 1781 he received the cross of St. Louis: on the 10th May 1782 he became Captain Commandant; and on the 1st June 1783 he was given command of the company of Chasseurs, say of the light company of the regiment. Now began a struggle for promotion in which his Colonel pointed out that, as Sérurier was getting old, he would not be fit for higher posts if allowed to remain a Captain much longer. On the 8th September 1788 Sérurier applied, in disgust, to be allowed to retire on pension, but, in forwarding this, his chiefs again pressed for his promotion, and his Colonel claimed that some favour should be shown in his



regiment for officers doing duty well. At last on the 17th May 1789 he was promoted Major in another regiment, 'Médoc', then in the South, at Béziers. Thus the Revolution found Sérurier a married man of eleven years standing, with thirty-four years' service, counting the four with the militia, and having received two wounds on the field of battle.

On the 1st January 1791 Sérurier became Lieut.-Colonel. The troops at Perpignan were giving trouble, and Médoc, soon to be the 70th regiment, was sent there to steady the garrison, but the regiment soon became stirred by the spirit of the time. The Colonel of another regiment, 'Colonel-général', had emigrated with his officers, carrying off the standard of the regiment, and on the 23rd July a detachment of Médoc took from Sérurier's quarters the flags of the regiment and the safe; the men professed to have no grievance against Sérurier himself, saying they were only doing this as a precaution. The Minister, appealed to, was helpless, but the men calmed down and behaved well during the military plot in December to deliver the citadel to the Spaniards. Still, in January 1792 many officers emigrated, nineteen officers of Médoc leaving for Spain. According to a story believed by Napoleon, Sérurier and the younger Hédouville attempted to pass into Spain. They met a patrol and Hédouville got through, whilst Sérurier, much to his grief, returned, to become in time a Marshal of the Empire. General d'Anselme succeeded in keeping the regiment to its duty. At last, in June 1792 the regiment, under its Colonel, Meunier, started to join the Camp de Tournoux, part of the Armée du Midi, the 70th Regiment then going with that part of the army which became the Armée des Alpes, and then, on the further splitting up of that force, to the Armée du Var or of Italie, under d'Anselme. On the 7th August 1792 Sérurier became Colonel of the regiment.

Victor, whose real name was Claude-Victor Perrin, was born at Lamarche in the province of Lorraine, soon to be the Department of the Vosges, on the 7th December 1764. His father, a farmer, in time became 'fermier des domaines du roi', that is, I presume, of the local property of the King, and, intending his children for the law, was able to give them a good education, although in Italy Augereau described Victor as a brilliant soldier, but having no education. The young Claude-Victor was

fond of music and was able to play several instruments, amongst these, like Saint-Cyr and Wellington, the violin, but he was devoted to soldiering and enjoyed drilling his companions. His elder brother enlisted in the 4th or Grenoble Regiment of artillery, and Claude-Victor, then aged 15, started for Metz to enter a battalion of that regiment, but fell into the hands of an officer enlisting for the service of the Spaniards for Louisiana, a province of which Victor was nominally to be Governor many years later. The boy signed an agreement with this man, but his father got it cancelled on the ground that his son was under age, and placed him in a lawyer's office. At last, however, he gave way to his son's longing for the army, and Victor started for Paris and La Fère, to join the artillery, receiving a word of encouragement on the way from Louis XVI, as the King passed on a hunting party. At La Fère, where the 4th Regiment of artillery had a brigade of five companies, the Colonel, d'Hangest, considered him to be too young to serve, but, touched by the despair of the lad and finding that he was a musician and could play the clarionet, he let him enter the band. It probably is this that caused Victor sometimes to be described as a drummer. In 1839 he had a controversy with Alexandre Dumas as to his first profession. On the 15th October 1781, when nearly 17, he was formally enlisted as a gunner. Perfecting his education, and becoming an excellent fencer, he yet got no promotion; possibly the fiery temper he inherited from his mother told against him. He served in Picardy till 1787 and then went to Valence. The district was much disturbed by the revolutionary spirit, and in one riot the General commanding the artillery school at Valence, the Vicomte de Voisins, was killed. Whether any of the regiment had taken part in this riot or not, General du Teil<sup>1</sup> in his report of his inspection in 1790 wrote, 'Le régiment est assez mauvais; les soldats ont contracté un air de scélératesse'. Victor had re-engaged in 1789, but now his mother came to implore him to leave the army, and on the 1st March 1791, purchasing his discharge, he quitted his corps. On the 16th May he married Jeanne-Marie-Joséphine Muguët, daughter of the *greffier* of the criminal tribunal of Valence, and his father-in-law obtained employment for him in the offices of

<sup>1</sup> Jean-Pierre, Baron du Teil (1722-94), the brother of the General du Teil who commanded the artillery at the siege of Toulon.

the municipality of Valence. Then came the formation of the volunteers, and on the 12th October he joined the 3rd battalion of the volunteers of Drôme, the department in which Valence stood, apparently dropping his surname, Perrin. On the 16th June, three months after Victor's discharge, but while the latter was living in the town, Lieutenant Bonaparte joined the 4th Regiment of artillery there. Victor became *adjudant-sous-officier* on the 15th February 1792. His military knowledge got him noticed in another battalion which, with his, was being formed at Avignon, and on the 4th August he was transferred to the 5th Bouches du Rhône, as *adjudant-major*, becoming second Lieut.-Colonel of it on the 15th September 1792.

Louis-Gabriel Suchet was born, it is said, on the 2nd March 1772 (although the date is uncertain and may be taken as between 1770 and 1772) at 'la Mignonne', the country house of his father at Saint-Rambert-l'Île-Barbe, on the banks of the Saône, near Lyons, in that part of the province of Lyonnais soon to be the department of 'Rhône'. His father was a well-to-do silk merchant of Lyons, and Suchet was educated at a little college on the opposite side of the river to his home. At 17 he began learning his trade, presumably to follow his father, but, when the Revolution came, he joined, not the first levy of volunteers, nor any corps of his own Department, but the 4th battalion de l'Ardèche, a corps which seems to have been raised between January and July 1793. We are not told with what rank he joined, but his good education, and perhaps his height, told, and on the 20th September 1793 he was elected Lieut.-Colonel. According to one good authority, in 1792 he had entered a *compagnie franche*, which would explain his apparently late entry into the service, but this is not recognized by his latest biographer, nor by Gavard. His battalion joined the Armée d'Italie.

The Armée d'Italie, as it stood in Nice in the winter of 1792 under General d'Anselme, was nominally 26,806 strong, but with only 21,728 men actually present. Its commander had grandiose views. Using the French fleet, he sent an expedition on Oneglia, which was bombarded and burnt. Then the fleet appeared off Naples and obtained reparation for insults said to have been offered to the French Minister. Next d'Anselme proposed, of all things, a sea expedition to Rome. The Republic



was much in favour of 'expeditions', but the government thought Rome too far and preferred Sardinia. D'Anselme's opposition to this plan, together with suspicions, for which it is difficult to see any foundation, of his probity, determined the *Conseil exécutif* on the 16th December to transfer the command of the army to Biron, then commanding the Armée du Rhin. D'Anselme did not wait to be suspended, but handed over the command to Brunet, the senior General, and went off slowly to Paris, dispatching explanations by the way. He was arrested, and placed in retirement on the 12th April 1793. In 1798 he was made Inspector of Troops, became Chevalier of the Légion d'Honneur in 1805, and, more fortunate than many other Republican commanders, died in his bed on the 17th September 1814.

The expedition to Sardinia was carried out by Brunet: it sailed on the 8th January 1793 and returned defeated before the end of February. It was remarkable for the extraordinary indiscipline displayed by the troops, especially by the volunteers, who on one occasion proposed to hang Casabianca, their General: so bad, indeed, was the reputation of the volunteers from Marseilles, who formed part of the force, that the inhabitants of Toulon actually refused to allow them to embark there. These were the volunteers who, on finding that the enemy was firing real bullets, declared they had been betrayed. The interest of this expedition lies in the fact that Bonaparte, then a Captain of artillery on leave in Corsica, served as Lieut.-Colonel of Corsican volunteers with the detachment that unsuccessfully attacked the island of Maddalena. Here he was in some danger of capture, and had to abandon a howitzer. 'I have heard Napoleon', says Roguet, 'speak in terms far from flattering of this attempt on Sardinia', and this is not surprising, for indeed the sailors had tried to hang *him*! The troops returned to the army of Italy and Bonaparte to Corsica, where he remained engaged in local intrigues in opposition to Paoli. When Paoli triumphed and the island was about to declare itself independent, he removed on the 11th June to Toulon. It is to be hoped that none of the future Marshals took part in the expedition to Sardinia, but we find bitter complaints of the volunteers of Bouches-du-Rhône, and one of their battalions was commanded by Victor.

On the 10th February Biron, the new commander, joined, and began a series of attacks (continued by his successor) which advanced the army eastwards, at right angles to the coast, until its right was firmly placed at Sospel. The rest of its line was not very secure, but, with the assistance of the right of the 'Alpes', the valleys of the Var and of the Vésubie were cleared. In these affairs Masséna, in command of the 2nd Var, and Sérurier, in command of a column, both distinguished themselves. By March the army had only 17,000 men fit for service, for the reinforcements of 5,000, said by Jomini to have been brought by Biron, had never joined. Of the twenty-five battalions placed in the front line of the position Lieut.-Colonel Masséna commanded five: of cavalry there were only two squadrons of Dragoons. However, the Armée des Alpes had taken over a part of 'Italie's' original district, the Barcelonnette valley and the Comté de Beuil. The *Conseil exécutif* had determined that both 'Italie' and 'Alpes' should remain on the defensive, as indeed the enemy also had determined.

Biron is one of those commanders whose course to the scaffold one follows with regret. Although he was really serving the Revolution faithfully, he was, as a *ci-devant* duke, perhaps inevitably, suspect, and he was certainly marked down for destruction by Brune and the vile gang that pursued certain Generals. On the 4th May 1793 he was ordered to proceed to La Vendée to command the Armée des Côtes de La Rochelle, where we have already seen him. There may have been some wish to have a General of his standing to deal with the increasing forces of the insurrection, but one cannot help suspecting that there was a plan to prevent any commander's obtaining a real hold over his troops, and such changes certainly made that difficult. He himself knew that the hounds were on his track, and that attempts were being made to ruin him: indeed he pointed out to the Minister the intrigues which were to bring his successor to the scaffold after him; nevertheless he took now the fatal course which he was to continue in La Vendée, of speaking plainly about abandonment of his army by the War Department; and what sin is like that of attacking War Office officials?

In the sister army Kellermann himself, with his soldierly ideas and habits, an 'Oriental Despot' as Chépy called the least

eastern of Generals, had not been long before he gave the patriots reason for striking at him. The unlucky Beurnonville, snatched away into the clutch of the enemy by his old friend Dumouriez, was suspected of sending agents to Kellermann's army, proposing to that General to march on Paris with six (!) thousand men; and the Representatives with the 'Alpes' thought themselves justified in intercepting his letters to the Minister of the Interior, Garat. To their horror they found that Kellermann, true to his ideas before Valmy, wished to have nothing but regular troops with him; worse, that he wanted to raise Swiss regiments as under the Monarchy; worse still, that, if he could not get regulars or Swiss, then he wished to place his men in cantonments and to drill them into order. This would involve the temporary abandonment of some posts, which, he said, he could always retake. Then, his army drilled, he would deliver a superb battle on French territory. His troops were really in a wretched state, wanting organization, drill, food, clothing, and arms. Still, dreaming of the policy of Dumouriez, he had the quaint whim of proposing to profit by the esteem in which he believed the Prussians held him to treat definitively for peace with them. Now of all articles of faith for a patriot to hold in military matters, the two most important were that every spot of the territory must be covered, and that the raw volunteers were at least on a level with the regulars. Well might the Representatives, all aghast, say that the Convention would see that it was time to deal with Kellermann. These facts established, the Representatives, Hérault des Séchelles and Simond, accompanied by some municipal officers, troops of the line, and volunteers, suddenly made a domiciliary visit on the General; that is to say, the visit was made as public and as degrading as possible. Fortunately for Kellermann, these Representatives were not the blind idiots with whom too many of his comrades had to deal, and, after four hours of explanation, they came to the conclusion that there was nothing to justify their suspicions. It is needless to say that, on pronouncing their verdict of acquittal, all these Frenchmen embraced each other with emotion. Kellermann had answered their first reproaches with calmness, and had urged them to examine his papers, but his suspense must have been great and, if he too now gave way to emotion when he found himself free, it is easy to pardon him.



A proclamation of the 13th April 1793 told the army that they were not commanded by a traitor, or, in the words of the Representatives, that Kellerman was as a man pure, and as a Republican worthy to lead the soldiers of Liberty to fresh victories. The folly of the whole thing never struck the Representatives: a great part of the army was composed of young, raw troops, already suspicious of every one, and the shock to discipline caused by this trial must have been great; but in exalting their own office the Representatives rather liked to lower that of the commanders.

The declaration of Kellermann's innocence was only attained at the cost of his intellect. He had been in the habit of using the phrase 'my army', 'my soldiers', a style common amongst functionaries (as when an English Dean announced the collection of subscriptions for the restoration of 'My West Front'). When Brune later spoke of 'the troops of France', the horrified Napoleon declared that such a thing had been unknown since the days of King Pharamond, and Brune was never forgiven. Kellermann escaped more easily, and was only requested to alter his 'German style'. As for the idea that he ought to have at least an equal proportion of regulars to his volunteers, and that it was better to drill the men in rear than to hold on to every tiny post amongst the frozen hills, or again as to his proposal to form Swiss regiments, all these, the Representatives, calming down, pointed out to the *Comité* with some sense were only military opinions, submitted to the Minister. Kellermann, as his judges said, was not an Academician, he knew nothing of the world (Revolutionary world, be it understood), and very little about the decrees which were raining from Paris. 'He only knows his profession, he has the instinct of battle, that precious *coup d'œil* given by Nature, and which is worth a little more, no doubt, in a General than all the administrative or academical qualities. Every one acknowledges that he should be seen on horseback on the day of battle: with him we can hardly be unsuccessful.' Here we have 'Paget M.P.' in a relapse into common sense, and with a certain uneasy feeling of having gone too far! When the General is sometimes accused of flattering the Revolution at first, these words of the Representatives are his best defence, for, had he been a revolutionary braggart or a dealer in phrases, he would have received a judgement intended

to be more complimentary than, 'Il ne connaît que son métier'; a text which Saint-Cyr might have taken for some of his remarks. When the Representatives implied that he was deficient in administrative qualities, they did him great injustice; and Napoleon's use of him for many years as an organizer and administrator tells a very different tale. A letter from a young lad, I presume on his staff, seems taken from his lips, 'Kellermann ne voit pas comme nous sur Dumouriez', which at first was taken as 'suspect', until it was found that, whilst others credited Dumouriez with great plans and probably some success, the General had always said that the scoundrel was lost and would never recover himself: just the opinion we should have expected from the honest man. The only actual victim was his secretary, Jennesson, 'who gives his opinion with an air of importance', and went to prison to learn humility; he seems, however, to have escaped the scaffold.

The *Comité de salut public*, now the real ruler of France, was still not satisfied as to the innocence of the General: indeed, no less a personage than the quartermaster of a volunteer battalion had shown that he had tried to regulate the payment of his troops, and the Representatives were advised to keep a watchful eye on him, although the men might have explained that the idea of their receiving pay was but a vain imagination. So fierce was the attack that Hérault complained that the Representatives themselves were denounced before the Jacobins for not declaring Kellermann a traitor; and they continued to watch him with the greatest care: 'No mother watches her daughter more strictly; if he trips, we are there'. Still not content, on the 25th April 1793 the *Comité* directed the *Conseil exécutif* to call Kellermann up to Paris to be heard in his own defence: General d'Ornac was again to take temporary command of the 'Alpes', being placed under the superintendence of General Brunet, who was given the command of 'Italie'.

Brunet,<sup>1</sup> who took command on the 8th May, had already filled the vacancy between Montesquiou and Biron. He was an officer of the old army and, as General of Brigade, had commanded the advanced guard when d'Anselme entered Nice. The Commissioners who had reported against d'Anselme had

<sup>1</sup> Général Gaspard-Jean-Baptiste Brunet (1734-93), Chassin, *Vend. Pat.*, ii. 361, note 1; Michaud, vi. 117; *Biog. des Cont.*, i. 668.

praised Brunet's zeal. During May and June he carried out a series of attacks on Mont-Aution, to the east of his position. On the 19th May he sent a column from his left, under Colonel Sérurier, to act with a column from 'Alpes', some 3,000 in all. Making the junction at Saint-Sauveur in the valley of the Tinée, Sérurier moved up the river, crossed it on the 21st, almost swimming, and occupied Isola. He left the post to the troops of 'Alpes', and the enemy evacuated the upper valley of the Tinée. This action won praise for Sérurier from Brunet. On the 8th June Colonel Masséna had his success: in the attacks on the last position of Mont-Aution he scaled the hills at the double to turn the enemy at Linieras. The French thus took Mangiabo. On the same day Sérurier with 3,000 men attacked the Col de Raus,<sup>1</sup> but was beaten off. Then on the 12th June Sérurier led the central column, composed almost entirely of grenadiers, against the entrenchments covering the battery at the head of Mont-Aution: three times the assault was delivered with the greatest impetuosity, but the column was supported only by distant fire from the reserves and, worn out and taken in flank by the enemy's guns, it retired before an Austrian counter-attack. Then some of the new levies in second line threw down their arms crying 'Treason!' and bolted. Brunet, considering his young soldiers unfit for such an offensive, drew off with a loss of 280 dead and 1,252 wounded.

Meanwhile Kellermann had been heard by the *Comité* at Paris at some length on the 13th, 14th, and 17th May, and went fully into all his actions and plans. The accusations against him were so childish that he had little difficulty in disproving them, part of his danger coming from the rancorous Custine, who had not ceased the denunciations which he had begun about the Trèves expedition in 1792, and which Kellermann, anticipating modern methods, at one time declared he would answer in the press. The sitting of the *Comité* on the 17th May was attended also by some members of the *Comité de sûreté générale*, especially invited to hear Kellermann and, after his letters and those of the Representatives had been read, he himself, who all this time was not a prisoner, but spoke as a free man, gave a satisfactory account of all he had done and all he intended to do. The combined body, 'convinced that the General has not ceased to

<sup>1</sup> The Col de Raus, or Raous, is about 5 kilos north-west of Mt. Aution.



merit the confidence of the Nation, and that he has well served the Republic in the important post entrusted to him', decided that the *Comité* should report to that effect to the Convention and should propose a decree that he had not ceased to deserve the confidence of the Republic. This was agreed to by the Convention on the 18th May, so that the final result was that the command of the army had been disorganized for nothing.

Fortune turned, and the *Comité* began consulting Kellermann, not now about his misdeeds, but about the affairs in the West, where matters seemed getting desperate; it was proposed to send him to command the Armée de la Rochelle, one of the three armies in La Vendée, at all events till Biron, coming from 'Italie', who was rather long on his way, should arrive. However, the *Conseil-exécutif-provisoire*, composed of the Ministers, determined on the 20th May that the command of the Armée d'Italie should be united to that of the 'Alpes', and that both forces should be under Kellermann. This matter was discussed by the Convention on the morning of the 21st May, when Collot d'Herbois attacked the union of the armies. General Brunet was to command 'Italie' under Kellermann, and his supporters argued that he was fit for a separate command, so the Convention referred the question to the *Comité*, which the same day advised the Convention to approve of the temporary appointment of Kellermann to command both forces. Even now, however, it was still proposed to send the General to La Vendée, to organize the armies there, and to make arrangements before the arrival of Biron, and on the 2nd May the *Comité*, who descended to the smallest details, ordered the Minister for War to keep four horses ready at Tours, for Kellermann to use as long as he was with the Armée de la Rochelle, instead of those he had left with the 'Alpes'. The economical *Còmité* took care to prescribe that the horses should not be taken when the General should start for whatever command were given him. At the same time the *Comité* listened to the General's ideas on the best division of the armies in La Vendée, where the districts and organization of the armies were often changed. On the 26th May 1793 the Convention decreed that the joint command of both 'Alpes' and 'Italie' should be held by Kellermann temporarily: Brunet, however, was to remain at the head of 'Italie', and to have the right to carry out 'urgent' movements on his

own initiative, a fine opening for difficulties with some Generals, for who is to decide what is urgent? Finally on the same evening the *Comité* determined that, as Biron was actually about to assume his command in La Vendée, while General d'Ornac, holding Kellermann's place at the 'Alpes', expected an attack, Kellermann should start at once for his new command. These complicated proceedings provide a noteworthy example of what happens when the administration of an army is regulated by Assemblies or by their committees. At last Kellermann, saved from the bloody welter in La Vendée, was free and in command of two armies, whose movements undoubtedly ought always to have been guided by one hand. Some idea of the confusion which existed in the War Office can be formed from the fact that on the 9th June one of the assistants there asked the *Comité* whether Kellermann really had the command of both armies.

On his return to the *Armée des Alpes* Kellermann found the position unchanged, for the snows, now fast melting, had prevented all serious operations. One of his first acts when passing through Briançon was to blame the indiscipline and praise the bravery of part of the garrison, who on their own initiative had attacked and taken a post of the Piedmontese. Lieutenant Marmont had joined in February and was probably now just moving from Grenoble to the Camp de Tournoux. Having inspected his own positions, Kellermann went on to those of the *Armée d'Italie*, and, arriving at Nice, he arranged with Brunet and the Representatives that 'Italie', which had advanced its front considerably, should now remain on the defensive in positions chosen by him. On the 24th June, the moment this was settled, he started for Gap to rejoin his own immediate command. Now he heard of a check received by the troops of the Camp de Tournoux. Camillo Rossi, commanding there, had attacked the enemy. At first he was successful, but eventually retreated, when his troops, becoming furious, declared him a traitor, seized him, and brought him as a prisoner into the camp of Saint-Ours. There Santerre, a curious double of the famous brewer-general of Paris, headed the cry for his condemnation. Lieutenant Marmont, a spectator of this scene, believed that the General was not to blame, but, amidst the insults of the men, Camillo Rossi was taken on foot to prison in Barcelonnette, and in due time lost his head. Kellermann went

to Tournoux on the 2nd July and reorganized the defence there, leaving in command Gouvion, to be replaced by the old Carcaradec, who became a patron of Marmont. On the 7th July he reached Grenoble.

Brunet did not remain inactive. He was, like Biron, one of a class of officers who did not like the violence and the intermeddling of the Jacobins, but who might have served the Republic well enough if permitted to do so. He had tried to keep clear of politics, but he had listened to, and even encouraged, officers who had expressed their hatred for the Mountain and its ascendancy in the Convention, where it had crushed the Girondins. At the end of July he again attacked Mont-Autou, and, although Sérurier was once more beaten back at the Col de Raous, the operation so far succeeded that the shortest route of communication with 'Alpes' was opened up and the left of 'Italie' covered. Brunet therefore proposed to mass his troops on Sospel and, passing through Genoese territory, to turn the enemy's left. The Representatives approved, with the curious stipulation that he must succeed in his enterprise. Now, however, Brunet lent himself to destruction. General Lapoype,<sup>1</sup> his Chief of the Staff, was extreme in his revolutionary principles, and Brunet disliked him, believed he was trying to supplant him, complained of him to the Minister, and got rid of him by placing him in command of the coast from Fréjus to the Var. Lapoype, in justifying himself to the Minister, pleaded that he was being victimized for his patriotic opinions and demanded to be transferred to 'Alpes'; this move was sanctioned, but not carried out. Now Lapoype was brother-in-law to the Representative Fréron, who with certain other Representatives, including Barras, had come to this army. Brunet pointed out, correctly enough, that Fréron had not been sent to his army by the Convention: he was right, but this was to draw down the wrath of Fréron and of Barras. Then Brunet, when asked to make his army accept the new unworkable Constitution of 1793, replied that *corps d'armée* were forbidden to deliberate, and he proposed to announce simply that the Constitution was settled, and to put in orders the letter from the Representatives imply-

<sup>1</sup> Général Baron Jean-François Lapoype, *ci-devant* Marquis (1759-1851). Employed under the Empire; Chuquet, *Jeunesse de Napoléon*, iii. 303-4; *Biog. des. Cont.* iii. 155-6.



ing its acceptation. The Representatives had to acknowledge that he was right, but no less did they keep this as a grievance against him. But a more serious matter was about to strain the relations between Generals and Representatives to breaking-point, and to endanger the whole frontier watched by the two armies.

## VI

### MARSEILLES AND LYONS

(July to October 1793)

Revolt of Lyons and Marseilles. Kellermann's successful defence of the frontier. His removal and imprisonment.

ALARMED by the proceedings in Paris, where the Girondins had been crushed by the Jacobins, and where the violence and illegal acts of the extreme revolutionary party were more and more manifest, a movement of opposition to the Convention was spreading in the South to result in the insurrection of the three great towns, Lyons, Marseilles, and Toulon. In both armies, 'Alpes' and 'Italie', the Representatives at once determined to carry fire and sword against their opponents, whilst Kellermann and Brunet, anxious not to weaken their forces in presence of the enemy, believed, in all probability rightly, that it was possible to bring the towns to submission without the employment of extreme measures. Always more virulent against their countrymen than against their foes in the field, the Representatives in both armies insisted on forces being detached against the towns; and they treated the objections of the commanders as a sort of treason, and as proof of their complicity with the insurgents. They were unable to understand the feeling which made the Generals look first to the defence of the frontier, and Chépy was only expressing the feeling of such men at the time when he complained of the obstinacy of the staff of the army in occupying itself with what went on outside, not inside the Republic. It may be urged that the Representatives took a sounder view than did the commanders, for it was certainly all important to crush the towns before the revolt spread. This, however, is to assume the necessity for such crushing. But, if a blow was to be struck at the towns, it ought to have been delivered as quickly as possible, and much of the difficulty here came from the election of charlatans to command the forces sent against them.

For what now ensued, the interesting but melancholy history of what is called the Federal movement in 1793—the attempt of the Departments to check the tyranny of the Capital—should

be studied in the valuable works of M. Wallon. The Convention certainly acted with great vigour, and the three towns were all captured by their forces, when a cruel revenge was taken by the triumphant but alarmed Jacobins. Still, the victory was probably unnecessary, and was attained only at a great cost: the frontier was exposed for the moment (and for this France would have paid dearly before an enterprising enemy), and the fleet at Toulon suffered damage, while the legacy of hatred left in the South weakened the Republic by forcing it to maintain considerable forces there. The tenacity of this hatred was to be shown, to quote one instance only, by the murder of Marshal Brune in 1815. Fortunately for him, Kellermann's share in this civil war was but slight, although it left a mark on his fortunes. Whilst his colleague, Brunet, taking the more daring course of refusing to act on the orders of the Representatives and requiring the orders of the Convention itself, went to the scaffold, Kellermann, equally reluctant to detach troops against the towns, and declining any responsibility, yet obeyed and in the end lost only his command and not his life.

Marseilles had broken into revolt first, and had once more prepared to send troops to Paris, but this time to act against the Convention: Lyons was in the same temper, and support was not wanting in the Departments. Just at this juncture the *Comité* had intended to weaken the Armée des Alpes by ordering 4,000 men to be sent to the Armée d'Italie, to replace an equal number detailed from that force for an expedition to Corsica. On the 29th May Lyons revolted, and Dubois-Crancé, the Representative, who at this time took the lead in the South,<sup>1</sup> at once authorized Kellermann to stop the draft meant for 'Italie', and called on him to march with his army on Lyons. The situation was most grave, for that city was rich and populous, had an arsenal, and was a good base. It was known that the Allies had plans for pushing forward through Savoy on Lyons, and if once successful resistance could be made to the Convention, the Constitutional and Royalist parties would become formidable, so that immediate action of some sort was necessary. On the other hand both the armies for which Kellermann was responsible were so weak that any withdrawal of troops from the frontier was almost certain to entail an advance of the enemy

<sup>1</sup> For Dubois-Crancé see Jung's work, *Dubois-Crancé*.



into France, and an accusation of treason against the commander for leaving the frontier exposed, as Kellermann after his late experience knew well. Thus he demurred to the requisition of Dubois-Crancé, but one measure was taken. On the 2nd July Carteaux, then only an Adjutant-General, was sent from Grenoble on Avignon to intercept the Federalist force, or *Armée départementale* which was pushing up the Rhône from Marseilles. It is most convenient to deal with these operations here. On the 8th July Carteaux took command at Valence of a small force of 1,754, composed of troops partly from 'Alpes' and partly from reinforcements on the march for the *Armée des Pyrénées Orientales*. This body took the title of *Armée du Midi*: it is also sometimes called the *Armée Révolutionnaire*. It moved down the Rhône valley, being reinforced on its way (amongst other bodies, by the volunteer battalion in which Junot was a non-commissioned officer<sup>1</sup>), and it became 3,830 strong. Carteaux himself was one of the strange products of the period. Son of a Dragoon, he had become an artist. The Revolution made him an ardent patriot and, as an officer of the National Guard, he was one of the 'heroes' of the attack on the Tuileries on the 10th August 1792. Sent to the *Armée des Alpes*, he became an Adjutant-General, and then General of Brigade in July 1793. Of fine, striking appearance, no one could have figured better than he as the god Mars in the mythological pageants of the period. His loud devotion to the cause of the Jacobins, his braggings of military prowess, and his coarse language, won the graces of the party, but to do him justice, he did not possess their sanguinary bitterness, and he was more to be ridiculed than feared.

Thrown back for a moment from Avignon, on the 25th July he occupied that town, abandoned by the Marseilles troops, and he considered himself a real conqueror. At, or in front of, Avignon, his column was joined by a young Captain of artillery, Bonaparte, detached from the *Armée d'Italie* (apparently from the centre of that force), by Masséna at the instance of General Du Teil, commanding the artillery of 'Italie'. Bonaparte's duty was to draw guns and ammunition from Avignon, for there had been, it was said, fourteen guns in the town when it was occupied

<sup>1</sup> There is a difficulty, described farther on, in stating to which battalion Junot belonged. Here I assume it to be the 2nd Côtes d'Or.

by the force from Marseilles. Whether this be so or not, Bonaparte took part in the operations of part of Carteaux's force on the right bank of the Rhône, and commanded its artillery. Marseilles was occupied on the 25th August and Bonaparte returned there to reorganize the park seized by the insurgents. He was disheartened and discouraged by all that was happening around him, and he sought to escape from the confusion by applying to the Minister for an artillery command in the Armée du Rhin, which was then under Alexandre de Beauharnais. There he probably hoped to be with a regularly organized force and to escape from the weltering confusion in the South. Later he went back to Nice, and then was sent to Marseilles for supplies. Had his request been granted, he could not have risen rapidly.

One incident spurred the Representatives against Lyons. The virtuous Chabot, the chief patriot of that city, had got a guillotine sent from Paris, and proposed to execute nine hundred victims, whose bodies were to be thrown into the Rhône. Alas, the citizens seized him, and carried him to the machine, at sight of which he fainted, and his own head fell on the 18th July. His death, as he himself had prophesied, cost dear to Lyons, for what patriot was safe if the guillotine could be used on those who called for blood to save the country? Already on the 8th July Dubois-Crancé had written to Kellermann, urging him strongly as 'the General of the Republic' to march himself on Lyons, but the Representative had to acknowledge that the city was not exactly under the decree of the Convention concerning those who had taken up arms against them, because it had not yet placed an armed force in the field; also, although a decree gave Dubois-Crancé power to march on Lyons, it contained the significant stipulation that the frontier was not to be stripped of troops. So on the same day Kellermann answered that he was ready to march, but that he required a written order to clear himself of responsibility. This order the Representative seems not to have ventured to give, and a decree eventually given by the Convention on the 14th July, ordering Kellermann to subdue Lyons and for that purpose to assemble sufficient forces, would appear not to have been received until the 20th July.

At Grenoble Kellermann had had a disagreeable reception, for every local patriotic club considered itself competent to order military operations, and the harassed General was met

by the *Société populaire*, which gave him its decision as to the fate of Lyons, and practically summoned him to march on that city. Here we get a glimpse of the inner working of the revolutionary machinery, for Chépy, sent to the district as a political agent, informed the Minister for Foreign Affairs that it was he who had got this measure adopted by the Club. 'There is no doubt', wrote Chépy, 'that he will execute the plan, but he has shown a little repugnance.' Fancy a General being summoned by a political agent to march where a club thought fit! On the 26th July Kellermann wrote to the *Comité*, expressing his belief in the pacific intentions of the inhabitants of Lyons, who were allowing him to remove a squadron of cavalry and some artillery from it, and he believed that they were quite ready to obey the Convention if they were treated as brothers. Brunet took the same line about Marseilles and, especially, Toulon; but he was not so guarded as Kellermann, who had learnt the danger of opposing any opinion of the Republican government, and who was careful to explain that it was only 'Kellermann, citoyen isolé', who spoke. As General of the armies of 'Alpes' and 'Italie' he was ready to march on the city, but he hoped that the expedition would only last a few days. Later he explained his difficulties. He had forty-seven battalions, some very raw, to guard 180 miles of frontier and nine forts, and he would require 18,000 men, with a siege-train, to subdue the city. He proposed to withdraw troops from certain points to form a force, although obviously he disliked doing so. At last, on the 1st August he left Grenoble, and on the 6th he, with his Chief of the Staff, Saint-Rémy, General Dumuy, and the Representative Dubois-Crancé, marched on Lyons with some 10,000 infantry and 3,000 cavalry, a force which finally had to be increased to 28,000 men, so great were the internal difficulties of the Republic. Although a large part of these men was used against Toulon later, it took some 38,000 to crush that city. Generals Petit-Guillaume and Vaubois, both to serve later under Bonaparte in Italy, were with this force, and Joseph Bonaparte, on his way from Paris to Marseilles, was detained by the siege for some days.

Like Kellermann, Brunet pointed out all the objections to weakening his army, and he hoped that Marseilles could be conciliated: it was, he said, not like La Vendée. He proposed conferences between the Representatives and the leaders in



Marseilles. These leaders praised him, and, what was more dangerous still, all the Representatives did not support Barras and Fréron in their wish for violent measures; indeed one of them, Despinassy, said he would rather be cut in pieces than ever make war on his brethren. Further, Brunet pointed out with much foresight the danger that Toulon, if pressed, might throw itself open to the fleets of the enemy. Consequently he refused to detach troops without a decree from the Convention, and he wrote to the Minister, pointing out the danger if every Representative with the armies took on himself to detail troops at will. He was right, but hopelessly out of date, for the tyranny of the Representatives with the armies was now at its height. Barras and Fréron arrived at Nice, having escaped under the escort of Lapoype from the bands of Toulon, and on the 8th August they suspended Brunet and ordered the senior General, Dumerbion, to take command. Barras professes that, wishing to save Brunet, he only sent him to his home in the Basses-Alpes, and did not intend to charge him with treason, but that, as the General chose to go to Paris and attack the legality of the acts of the Representative, he sent what he considered the incriminating correspondence to the *Comité*, who condemned the General. This cannot be true: on the 6th August he and Fréron had already denounced the General 'hautement' to the *Comité* as a traitor and as a person openly allied with the 'homicidal wretches who exercised the most fearful despotism on the people of Toulon and of Marseilles'. This was hardly the way to save him. According to Victor, the *Comité* with exceptional clemency sent him to the Department of the Gironde to assist in carrying out the levy of 300,000 men: but after Toulon had admitted the Allies his enemies clamoured for his head. Toulon, however, only opened its port on the 27th August, and on the 16th two Representatives, Ricord and the younger Robespierre, had informed the *Comité* that they believed Brunet to be the soul of the counter-revolution in the South. On the 29th August Barras and Fréron declared that 'le perfide Brunet' must have known of the plot, and they demanded that he should be sent to the Abbaye, the ante-chamber of the guillotine, and be tried by the *Tribunal Révolutionnaire*. The vile temper of the Representatives may be judged from the declaration of one of them, Albitte, that, if it were

permitted to a good patriot to be greedy for blood, it would be with that of Brunet he would like to quench his thirst. On the 19th August, that is before the revolt of Toulon, the *Comité* had ordered Brunet to be replaced in his command of 'Italie', and to be transferred to Paris, and on the 6th September they sent him to the Abbaye prison. He was tried on the 14th November and next day went to the scaffold with great firmness. His predecessor with 'Italie', Biron, followed him to death on the 31st December, part of his crime being complicity with Brunet. It is a sickening tale, for Brunet's real crimes were his having hurt the vanity of the Representatives, and having had the sense to foresee the danger of their attitude towards Toulon. What is strange is that the Representatives were genuinely astonished when they found they were looked on as cannibals.

The tone of the army was very different from that of the Representatives, and, as I have already said, of all the future Marshals only two have the evil distinction of complicity in Revolutionary excesses and denunciations. Brune was one of these two and it must have been about this time that Suchet, carried away for a moment, let us hope, by all that passed around him, was professing his readiness to shoot down 'l'infâme commune de Bédouin'. All the Marshals were not so clear of speculation, Masséna for one. On the 14th February the special commissioners sent by the Convention to report on the Armée du Var denounced, amongst others, 'Masséna, capitaine des guides', as aiding the commissariat officer sent to carry off supplies for the army from the villages. Doubtless the original object of the order was merely for what now passes as proper 'requisitions', but money was taken also. In after years Masséna was to pass as unscrupulous in such matters, but here whatever was wrong was, according to the commissioners, authorized by General d'Anselme, and Masséna does not seem to have suffered. One would have liked to believe in the kindly act attributed to Masséna by his biographer, namely an attempt to shield General Dortoman, his predecessor in command of the Camp of Béolet, who had been arrested mainly on suspicion, by getting the officers and men to sign a petition in the General's favour, but unfortunately this is a mistake. But, while Brunet went to his death, partly on accusations of ill-success, one result of the actions he had fought was that both

Sérurier and Masséna became Generals of Brigade. Although Sérurier had been beaten back in the last attack, no blame was thrown on him. Barras, complaining of other Generals, praised him, and on the 25th June the Representatives with the army nominated him provisionally General of Brigade, a promotion confirmed on the 22nd August. On the 19th August Dumerbion ordered Masséna from Béolet to command the Camp de Fougasse or Fogassa, under the Fourches, where with 3,000 men he had at once to beat off repeated attacks. Here he received his nomination as Colonel of the Régiment de la Sarre, the 51st Regiment of the regular infantry. Such a promotion of a volunteer officer, even though he was a former non-commissioned officer of regulars, might have been awkward for him, for the professional feeling and uncertainty as to the future were so strong that men in his position were sometimes ready even to revert to Captain in order to rejoin what they believed would be more permanent units. Masséna, however, was saved all the trouble on this ground, for on the same date as Sérurier he also was promoted General of Brigade.

Dumerbion, the new temporary commander of 'Italie', had served in the old army in the Seven Years War: the Revolution found him Captain of grenadiers, and the campaigns in this theatre had run him up rapidly to General of Division.<sup>1</sup> He had shown firmness, not to say roughness, in carrying out the mission of arresting Brunet. 'General', he had said to his commander, 'No explanations! Obey, spare me from using the means of force with which I am surrounded!' He possessed the confidence of the Representatives, and though old, gouty, and sometimes in bed for months, he yet held the command for more than a year. 'The excellence of Dumerbion as General', says Wallon, 'was that, already old and without jealousy, he let Masséna act.'

Now began the siege of Lyons, in which Kellermann's part was simply the military one, to take the city with as little bloodshed as possible. His summons, his addresses, and his dealings with the insurgents, were framed in the most moderate terms, so that, had the matter been entirely in his hands, Lyons might have opened its gates with safety and honour. 'General Keller-

<sup>1</sup> Général N. Dumerbion (1734-97), Michaud, lxiii. 121; *Biog. des Cont.*, ii. 1470; *Corr. Nap.*, xxix. 29.



man is an honest man', wrote Chépy in a good mood, 'who understands nothing of politics, and who, judging the people of Lyons by the outside only and by the fine promises they make him, believes them to be the best men in the world.' Even the Representatives at his elbow took a sensible and humane view, although a difference seems to have existed always between them and the General, who believed the defeat of the enemy on the frontier would reduce Lyons, while they considered that the capture of Lyons meant the defeat of the enemy on the frontier. What Kellermann wanted at the moment was reinforcements, and those he received were of the most motley description. The Hussar regiment of Berchény, most of whose men had passed over to the enemy with Dumouriez, and which had been filled up to 1,200 men with only 700 horses, arrived from the North. One battalion, the Chasseurs des Alpes, swarmed with deserters, Croats, Turks, Poles, Bosnians, Servians, Hungarians, Austrians, Spaniards, and Piedmontese, while the grenadiers of another battalion were almost entirely deserters from the service of Savoy. In dealing with this medley, and in supplying his army, Kellermann showed the qualities which were to recommend him to Napoleon as an organizer; and even now, when the armies of the Republic were usually deficient of most things, he succeeded in establishing stores fit to clothe 50,000 men and to equip 32,000. 'I have never seen a store so well kept', wrote Chépy; although boots, articles of which the Republic was always strangely deficient, were not in existence.

While Kellermann was occupied before Lyons, the storm he had foreseen broke on his army, weakened as it had been for the siege. The enemy partly (but by good fortune not fully) understood the difficulties of the French with two sieges, Lyons and Toulon, on their hands, and they determined on an attack both on 'Alpes' and 'Italie'. The main blow was to be delivered against the Armée d'Italie on the coast, but, as often happens with allied forces, the right and left of the enemy did not strike at the same time. The operations against the 'Alpes' were entrusted to the Duke of Montferrat, who commanded the troops in the Aosta and Susa valleys. On the 14th August the Duke came down the Little Saint-Bernard into the valley of the Isère (or the Tarentaise), while on his left the Marquis de Cordon<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Often printed as Gordon.

passed over Mont Cenis into the valley of the Arc (or the Maurienne). The two valleys were held by the division of Dubourg, who, himself posted at Conflans (or Albertville),<sup>1</sup> had placed Badelaune's brigade in the Tarentaise, and that of Ledoyen in the Maurienne. Both were overpowered and fell back down the valleys, Badelaune standing at last at Conflans, and Ledoyen at Aiguebelle. Dubourg informed Kellermann that, if further pressed, he must retreat on the fort of Barraux on the Isère below Montmélian, thus uncovering Chambéry. This would have meant the abandonment of Savoy, which had been the first prize of the Republic, and also the loss of a body of troops in the valley of the Arve for, before the Duke of Montferrat had begun his movement, some Piedmontese troops had been sent over the Great Saint-Bernard into the valley of the Arve; a disregard of their neutrality at which the Swiss authorities winked. This detachment, carrying spare arms with it, organized the peasantry of the valley against the French and, being reinforced from the Tarentaise by the Col du Bonhomme, it took Sallanche on the 21st August, when the French retreated, or rather fled, to Carouge, close to Geneva. Had Dubourg drawn back on Chambéry, the enemy could then have detached a force from Conflans by Annecy, and thus have cut off the troops in the Chamonix valley, who would have been taken in front and rear.

The enemy had chosen a moment when it was a question whether the whole of the south-east of France might not burst into flame. The Representatives before Lyons, however, saw only that hated city and at first they refused to permit Kellerman to leave the siege and to join his troops on the frontier for more than four days. Starting from Lyons on the 19th August, he reached Conflans on the 21st, and there and at Aiguebelle made what arrangements he could for defence. But he had to return to the siege on the 24th. The Representatives in Savoy, however, naturally did not see with the same eye as those before Lyons, and they at last obtained permission for the General to command his army in person: and this more easily because Dubois-Crancé was not ill-satisfied to conduct the siege himself with the force left by Kellermann before Lyons under General

<sup>1</sup> Conflans on the left, and l'Hôpital on the right bank, of the river Arly were united in 1845 as Albertville, which is the key of the Tarentaise as Aiguebelle is of the Maurienne: Chépy, 182, notes 1 and 3.

Dumuy. Still, one of the Representatives, Herbez-Latour, took on himself to interfere with the measures proposed by the General, and, driven to the wall, both Kellermann and General Carcaradec gave in their resignations, which, however, they soon withdrew, doubtless having gained their point. Starting at eleven at night on the 31st August, Kellermann now went in succession to Grenoble, Chambéry, and Montmélian, encouraging the authorities. He then fixed his head-quarters at Marches, a little to the south of Montmélian. He had ordered up what troops he could, taking some battalions from the Camp de Tournoux, and even the men with the smallpox and the itch were drawn from the hospital to fight. He had obtained leave from the Representatives to issue an order calling out the National Guards of the Departments of Mont-Blanc and Isère, and now he waited for the concentration of these reinforcements. He had one great advantage, for the Duke of Montferrat had not understood the importance of pushing on at once, and had let his two wings remain practically separated in the Tarentaise and Maurienne valleys, instead of marching down to make their junction on the Isère and to seize Chambéry. Kellermann thus had the central position, and he intended merely to hold Cordon's column in the Maurienne, while he brought part of his force on to the right flank of Montferrat in the Tarentaise. One body of his Tarentaise force was to advance up the Isère, while another moved farther north by the Beaufort valley, to come down afterwards on Aime in Montferrat's rear. His plan was likely to succeed, for the enemy in the Maurienne valley was still threatened by a body of French who from the first had held Valloire, on the slope of the hills to the south of Saint-Michel, and these troops remained a constant danger in Cordon's rear.

On the 10th September Cordon in the Maurienne advanced down the Arc in order to attack, expecting to be reinforced by Montferrat. He came on Ledoyen's troops constructing a battery, when, although the French ruined one of their guns by ramming home the shot before the cartridge (an accident which is said to have grieved the Captain of the transport *Himalaya* <sup>1</sup> off Sevas-

1 'The gun was laid, the aim was true, and if it had exploded, It would have battered down Sevastopol if it had been rightly loaded. But when they came to draw the charge, Lord! how the captain cursed, sirs; They found the quarter-master in his funk had rammed the ball down first, sirs.'



topol in 1855: in the days of smooth bores it was fatal), Cordon was checked, his reinforcements did not come up, and on the 16th September he fell back on Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne. Snow stopped further movements until the 27th September, when Ledoyen in his turn advanced up the valley, and on the 29th seized the southern end of the Col de la Madeleine, by which the two bodies of the enemy had communicated. While this was passing on Kellermann's right, his left column in the Beaufort valley made good progress and on the 28th September it took Beaufort. The next day Chambarlhac with part of this force succeeded in taking the Col du Cormet, leading down on Aime in the Isère valley, and was thus ready to descend on the rear of Montferrat. All this made Kellermann's task easy, the Tarentaise brigade was below, and to the west of Moûtiers, and he planned a general attack on Montferrat for the 2nd October, when Ledoyen from the Maurienne was to come down on Moûtiers from the south, Chambarlhac from the Beaufort valley was to do the same from the north, while the Tarentaise brigade advanced up the river. Montferrat, however, had understood the importance of the movement in the Beaufort valley, and he withdrew up the Isère. On the 3rd October Kellermann drove the rear-guard of the enemy up the Little Saint-Bernard, and thus cleared the Tarentaise: this success entailed the retreat of the enemy in the Maurienne, for Kellermann at once sent a force by the Col de la Madeleine on Cordon's right, while the troops at Valloire, reinforced, moved against his left. Cordon drew back up the valley nearly to Modane. On the 4th October Kellermann himself arrived at Saint Michel on the Arc by the Col des Encombres and collected the troops in the Maurienne, worn and shoeless as they were, so that by the 8th October the enemy had to retire up Mont Cenis. Far to the north the enemy had also been driven from the Faucigny, and had made their retreat by the Col du Bonhomme. The campaign had been short and creditable to Kellermann, who, with badly trained troops, had beaten off a superior force. Even Chépy reported that 'Kellermann has put himself at the head of the columns and has shown great activity'. In the later campaign of 1795, when he commanded the Armée d'Italie, it was said that he was unfit for mountain warfare, but this example of his style seems to disprove this judgement. Perhaps the occurrence in the

campaign most characteristic of the period was the act of the Representatives before Lyons in giving the General four days' leave to go to his army, as if he were a schoolboy anxious to see his mother.

On the front of the Armée d'Italie the enemy had moved early in September and made a determined attempt to take the Comté de Nice. The French right, where Masséna was, preserved its position, but Sérurier on the left with 3,000 men was hard pressed and, being always rather despondent, as Bonaparte was to say, on the 9th September he abandoned the right bank of the Vésubie, except Utelle, where on the 10th he placed himself. On the 13th General Dugommier replaced him in command of the left, and he went to Entrevaux to command the right of the 'Alpes', then much disorganized. Thus while Masséna, active and enterprising, was gaining in estimation, Sérurier had lost ground by his retreats, and naturally the agents of the *Comité* denounced him and lamented that so far the guillotine was unknown at Nice: it was necessary to 'épurer' the army, and was not only Sérurier but Dumerbion also a *noble*? He was arrested, but a certificate of 'civisme' from his fellow townsmen of Laon came to his support; the Representatives with the army, and even Bouchotte the Minister, saw the folly of the charges, and Sérurier was soon back at his post at Entrevaux. On the 17th November he was again taking the offensive. Masséna, who early in November had left the command of the centre, to replace at Utelle General Dugommier (now called to Toulon) was annoyed at not having been warned by Sérurier of this advance, and Dumerbion had to intervene to pacify him, explaining that Sérurier had acted under the orders of the commander of 'Alpes': indeed Sérurier was called to Grenoble, probably for instructions, on the 17th November. Finally, after an attack by Masséna, the army, in December, settled down in the snow: its right under Macquard was 3,000 strong, and held the line from Nice; the centre, 5,500 under Bizanet; and the left, 3,000 under Masséna. Sérurier's division of Entrevaux now formed part of 'Italie'.

Fresh from his success on the frontier, Kellermann believed he had to return to the dreary work of besieging Lyons, where the inhabitants had shown much energy and bravery: indeed, possessing at first forty guns, by the end they had succeeded in casting so many pieces that they then had one hundred guns and

two mortars, but the failure of the enemy's advance was fatal to them. The besiegers had had a valuable reinforcement, for the garrison of Valenciennes, part of the Armée du Nord, which had surrendered to the Duke of York on the 28th July on condition of not serving against the Allies for a year, was brought against the city.<sup>1</sup> I have already remarked on the folly of the Allies, who had most excellent information of the state of France, in not realizing the effect of granting such terms, for the troops set free from the northern frontier were used to suppress revolts at least as dangerous to the Convention as the attempts of the Allies. The garrison of Valenciennes insured, or certainly hastened, the fall of Lyons, when time was valuable. In 1745 the Dutch sent 6,000 men to support the English against the Scottish insurrection, but, as these had been part of the garrison of Tournay, which had surrendered to the French on condition of not serving against them or their Allies before January 1747, the French protested and 'it was thought they durst not have fought'. In the end the Dutch were sent home 'as there were French colours' with the army of Prince Charles, although only a handful of French troops was present.<sup>2</sup> Kellermann, however, was saved further trouble about Lyons, and the most curious part of the matter was that all this time he ought not to have been commanding the army at all. General Du Muy, to whom he had handed over the charge of the siege, had been suspended on the 1st September, much to his own surprise, and the cause is not stated.<sup>3</sup> General Lestrade refused the command on the 26th September on account of his age and infirmities and wished to retire. Coustard-Saint-Lô, the next commander, was suspended on the 7th October<sup>4</sup> and Dubois-Crancé openly took the com-

<sup>1</sup> These troops, 3,191 strong, arrived the 11th–20th September.

<sup>2</sup> Wemyss (Lord Elcho), *A Short Account of the Affairs of Scotland, 1744–6*, Edinburgh, Douglas, 1907. See pp. 279–80, 357, 389.

<sup>3</sup> Général Jean-Baptiste-Louis-Philippe de Félix, Comte du Muy (1751–18 ), a cavalry officer under the Monarchy, served in America, Maréchal-de-camp, 1788. Served in Egypt under Bonaparte and Governor of Silesia under the Empire. Jung, *Dubois-Crancé*, ii. 20, note 1. For his suspension see Krebs-Moris, i. 362, note 3.

<sup>4</sup> Guy, Chevalier de Coustard-de-Saint-Lô (1748–1825). Had been in the *Mousquetaires*, part of the *Maison du Roi*, Lieut.-Colonel of Chasseurs in 1791, General of Division 15th May 1793. Not employed on active service again. Chépy, pp. 167, note 2, 193. 'C'est un homme d'or.' Ditto, p. 193. Krebs-Moris, i. 362. Wallon, *Rep.*, iii. 36, note 4, confuses him with another man, see Chépy, pp. 167–8, note 2.



mand which he had really exercised from the first, or at least after the departure of Kellermann.

As for Kellermann himself, the common sense and humanity with which he had proceeded against Lyons were fatal to him in the eyes of the Convention. Also he had dared to throw the blame for the recent advance of the enemy, and even for the loss of Toulon, on the fact that his own plan of operations had not been followed, although he nominally ascribed this to 'événements de l'intérieur'. Not understanding the difficulties of the situation, and being much alarmed for themselves on account of the insurrections which were more personally dangerous than any invasion, the Jacobins denounced him, as indeed they did also Dubois-Crancé, for moderation and slowness. Kellermann had twice offered his resignation. On the 12th September the *Conseil exécutif*, 'considering that General Kellermann does not seem to have the confidence necessary to fulfil the important functions entrusted to him', dismissed him: next day the Convention nominated Doppet to succeed him, and the Minister forwarded the decree to the Representatives, telling them not to hand it to him until Doppet had arrived. Dubois-Crancé, however, an old soldier, probably appreciated the new commander rightly, and, when Doppet arrived before Lyons on the 25th September, he only placed him in command of the besieging force, so that as late as the 10th October Kellermann was writing his 'Précis' of the recent operations, not forgetting to do justice to himself: 'Such are the true principles of war, the good execution of which has preserved the whole frontier of the Alps from Mont Jura to the Mediterranean.'

Doppet now took charge of the siege, while d'Ornac commanded at Grenoble until the 31st October, when he gave up his charge by order of Doppet. The fall of Lyons was by this time certain, and on the morning of the 9th October part of the garrison under the leader, Précý,<sup>1</sup> broke out and cut their way through the besiegers, Précý himself gaining Switzerland. The fate of the city was made worse by the quarrel between the Representatives with the besieging force, for the conduct of

<sup>1</sup> Louis-François Perrin, Comte de Précý (1742-1820). He was permitted by Napoleon to return to France in 1810 at the instance of Marshal Lefebvre. Was commanding the National Guard at Lyons when Napoleon returned from Elba, but had to fly with Monsieur and Marshal Macdonald. Held the same post on the Second Restoration till 1816. Michaud, xxxvi. 30-8.

the more sensible and humane Dubois-Crancé and Gauthier had made them 'suspect' to the two fresh arrivals from Paris, Maignet and the infamous cripple Couthon, while also the *Comité*, irritated by the long resistance of the city, attributed the delay to them. On the 12th October the *Comité* ordered the arrest of Dubois-Crancé and Gauthier, a fate which they both managed to avoid. Consequently the unfortunate city, now styled 'Ville Affranchie', was handed over to Couthon and Maignet, followed by Fouché and Collot d'Herbois. 'The town of Lyons shall be destroyed', ran the decree of the Convention, although some exceptions were to be made, and some of the finest buildings and monuments fell, but that work was too vast to be completed. Human flesh was easier dealt with than solid masonry, and nearly two thousand persons were executed: but it is not so much the number as the extraordinary cruelty of the massacres which is so striking. It is horrible even now to read the account by M. Wallon of the blundering murders by case shot and musketry; when the young soldiers on one occasion took two hours to finish the victims, the patriots only considered this a good opportunity for blooding the young levies. However, one part of the account is pleasant reading: 'La dernière exécution fut celle des exécuteurs.'

Meanwhile the *Comité*, not satisfied with the temporary retention of Kellermann, decreed on the 11th October that, 'considering that General Kellermann has for long been convicted of having betrayed the Republic, that his dismissal, pronounced by the National Convention, was founded on the gravest motives, and cannot be contravened by any authority without a great danger to the Republic, Kellermann be at once placed in arrest, and sent to Paris'. His dismissal differed from that of any other commander, for in all their cases it was the opinion of the Representatives with the army, and of other such observers, that was fatal to the Generals; but here the Representatives seemed perfectly satisfied with his operations against the Piedmontese and even the 'patriot' Chépy was puzzled to find grounds for accusing him. He had against him the Representatives with 'Italie' (including the younger Robespierre), who thought the first success of the Piedmontese, gained in Kellermann's absence, must be due to him, but obviously they knew nothing of the matter. In reality the

stroke was aimed as much, if not more, at Dubois-Crancé and Gauthier.

By a curious chance Kellermann, quite ignoring his danger, had chosen this moment to apply to the Jacobins, requesting them to grant him the title of 'général des Jacobins'. The Society on the 19th October answered by erasing his name from its list of members. 'How many', says Hamel, the apologist of Robespierre, 'then hoped for a diploma as a Jacobin, who since then have with no less ardour solicited titles as Counts or Dukes!'

It must have been a painful surprise to Kellermann when at last, just after his success, he received the decree of the *Comité* at Grenoble. On the 16th October he handed over the command to General d'Ornac, who had twice already been temporarily at the head of the army. The order from Paris was that he should be sent to the Capital under charge of a detachment of *gendarmérie*, to be changed from post to post, but at his request his real successor, Doppet, who denies ever having accused him, had the good sense to let him travel in his own carriage without any escort but an officer of the *gendarmérie*. Doppet also permitted Kellermann's son to take the General's papers from Grenoble to Paris. Starting on the 18th October, on the 6th November Kellermann presented himself at the prison of the Abbaye in the Capital. Saint-Rémy, his Chief of the Staff, 'un feuillant, cuirassé de pédantisme', as Chépy styled that excellent officer, was also dismissed. The younger Kellermann, A.D.C. to his father, took refuge in Metz with his uncle Marbois, where he also was arrested, but obtained his liberty through the kindly help of the Mayor, Barthélemy. Returning to Grenoble, he tried to take up the command of the Chasseurs des Hautes-Alpes, the post to which he had been appointed, but which he had never taken up, being on the staff. This was refused, and he enlisted as a volunteer in the 1st Hussars, late Berchény, then in the Armée du Nord. As for Saint-Rémy, he was released in 1795, but died in 1800: it is a pity he did not live to share the rewards of his chief.

Kellermann's imprisonment, which lasted till November 1794, must have been a most trying time for him, as the heads of Generals were falling fast. But by some happy chance he passed the time of the Terror quietly in prison, amongst the curious



society described by Beugnot.<sup>1</sup> How this happened it is hard to say, for the legend that Fouquier-Tinville, the provider of food for the guillotine, passed over repeated orders to try him is incredible; and it is more probable that his victory at Valmy was his real protection, if we can imagine any such reasonable cause as being of avail in that wild nightmare. Also the stroke at him had been meant as much for the two Representatives, Dubois-Crancé and Gauthier, and when they succeeded in exculpating themselves possibly some of the ardour was taken from his accusers. There were Representatives who did not believe, with the bloodthirsty Billaud-Varennes, that he won victories only to distract the attention of the Convention from his evil deeds. This was a very creditable flight of fancy, even for Billaud, but the idea is the same as that in the proclamation issued by the Commissioners at Valenciennes when Dumouriez had deserted. 'He, therefore, began by conquering, because it was necessary for him.' Alas, how many Generals have felt the necessity for victory without attaining it! Finally, on the 27th July 1794 came Thermidor, the fall of Robespierre, and a slow return to common-sense and humanity. The Revolutionary Tribunal, although much altered, was still sitting, and on the 8th November 1794 Kellermann was tried and acquitted. Next, on the 15th January 1795, Dubois-Crancé, who with Carnot was on the *Comité*, obtained his restoration to his rank. Commanders were wanted, and we shall find him in March 1795 returning to be Generalissimo of 'Alpes' and 'Italie'.

Doppet, the man who had come to succeed Kellermann permanently, was one of three extraordinary commanders of the armies of the Republic, and on that account deserves some mention not due to his military exploits. Born at Chambéry in Savoy, not then part of France, he entered a French cavalry regiment as a volunteer in 1770, whence he passed into the Gardes Françaises in 1771, though it seems incredible that he should have come from the corps which sent out Lefebvre and Hoche. Leaving, or being dismissed from, the army on the 21st April 1773, he became a doctor, duly certificated by the University of Turin. He published a number of works chiefly relating to medical matters. The Revolution set his brain on

<sup>1</sup> *Mémoires de Comte Beugnot (1783-1815)*, 2<sup>me</sup> Edition, 2 vols., Paris, Dentu, 1868. See vol. i, pp. 190-279.

fire and, throwing himself into the movement, he became head of the *Légion des Allobroges* (formed of Savoyards), which became part of the Armée des Alpes. It does not seem to have been well regarded there, and it was being sent on to the Armée des Pyrénées Orientales when it was attached to the force with which Carteaux was marching on Marseilles. Accompanying Carteaux to Toulon, Doppet, who with the sickly sentimentality of the time had styled himself 'La Pervenche' or the periwinkle, became General of Brigade on the 19th August and General of Division on the 11th September. The order which sent him to Lyons found him before Toulon. This man, without the least real military knowledge or experience, and only chosen on account of his Republican principles, was time after time pitchforked from the head of one army to another. He has written his own Memoirs, which are worth reading to show the froth thrown up by the Revolutionary wave, but it must be said in his favour that, wild as his fervour was, he never took any part in the sanguinary excesses of his party, and we can believe him when he says, what is more creditable than it may seem, that he never denounced his predecessors, Kellermann or Carteaux. But it is a nightmare to imagine such a man sent to command three armies and two sieges.<sup>1</sup>

Doppet left the work of murder at Lyons to the civilians and busied himself in sending reinforcements from the late besieging force to the army before Toulon, altogether some 10,195 men. MM. Krebs and Moris in their account of the siege of Lyons mention the 1st Ardèche, under Captain Suchet, as having beaten back a sortie on the night of the 26th September, implying, I take it, that this refers to the future Marshal. I think it cannot do so, as Suchet, elected Lieut.-Colonel on the 20th September, was with the 4th Ardèche, which was not at the siege of Lyons, and which, I believe, was not then with any active force. But if this entry does refer to Suchet, it gives us October as the probable date of his joining before Toulon with the reinforcements from Lyons. As for Doppet, he left Lyons on the 26th October and made a tour of inspection through the Departments of Mont Blanc and Isère, reviewing the troops at Chambéry and Grenoble, at which latter place he harangued

<sup>1</sup> Général François-Amédée Doppet (1753-1800), Michaud, *Biog. Univ.*, xi. 568-70; *Biog. des Cont.*, ii. 1405; Jung, *Dubois-Crancé*, ii. 27, note 2.

the garrison 'en style de sans-culotte'. Although in reality he had had little to do with the capture of Lyons, he was in favour at Paris and on the 15th October the Minister had told him the *Comité* 'seemed to wish to give him the command of the army before Toulon'. He had the good sense to reply that he did not think he had the knowledge necessary for a siege, but on the 23rd October the *Comité* decreed that he must accept the post, relieving Carteaux, who was to command the Armée d'Italie, while Dours was to take over the 'Alpes'. On the 4th November, accordingly, he left Grenoble for Avignon and Toulon, where we shall find him.

General Dours, who now took command for some nine days, was one of the class, which, though nominally *noble*, had taken the revolutionary side: like most such men he had extreme opinions. He had served in the *gendarmerie* of the *Maison*, and had had a commission as officer in the army, but he was old and had retired when Carteaux came on him while marching on Marseilles and took him as A.D.C. In some way he became General of Division. He could have had little of the feelings of an officer, for we find him denouncing the garrison of Valenciennes, which had capitulated on condition of not serving against the Allies, and which, it would seem, the Convention meant to employ against Toulon. This matter was at first settled by their taking the place in the Rhône valley of other troops which were sent against Toulon, but it would almost seem as if, later, these troops were brought up into line in the Armée des Alpes. Here I must leave this army in order to turn to the siege of Toulon.



## VII

### TOULON

(September to December 1793)

Carteaux, Doppet, and Dugommier. Bonaparte's share in the siege.

#### CONTEMPORARY EVENTS

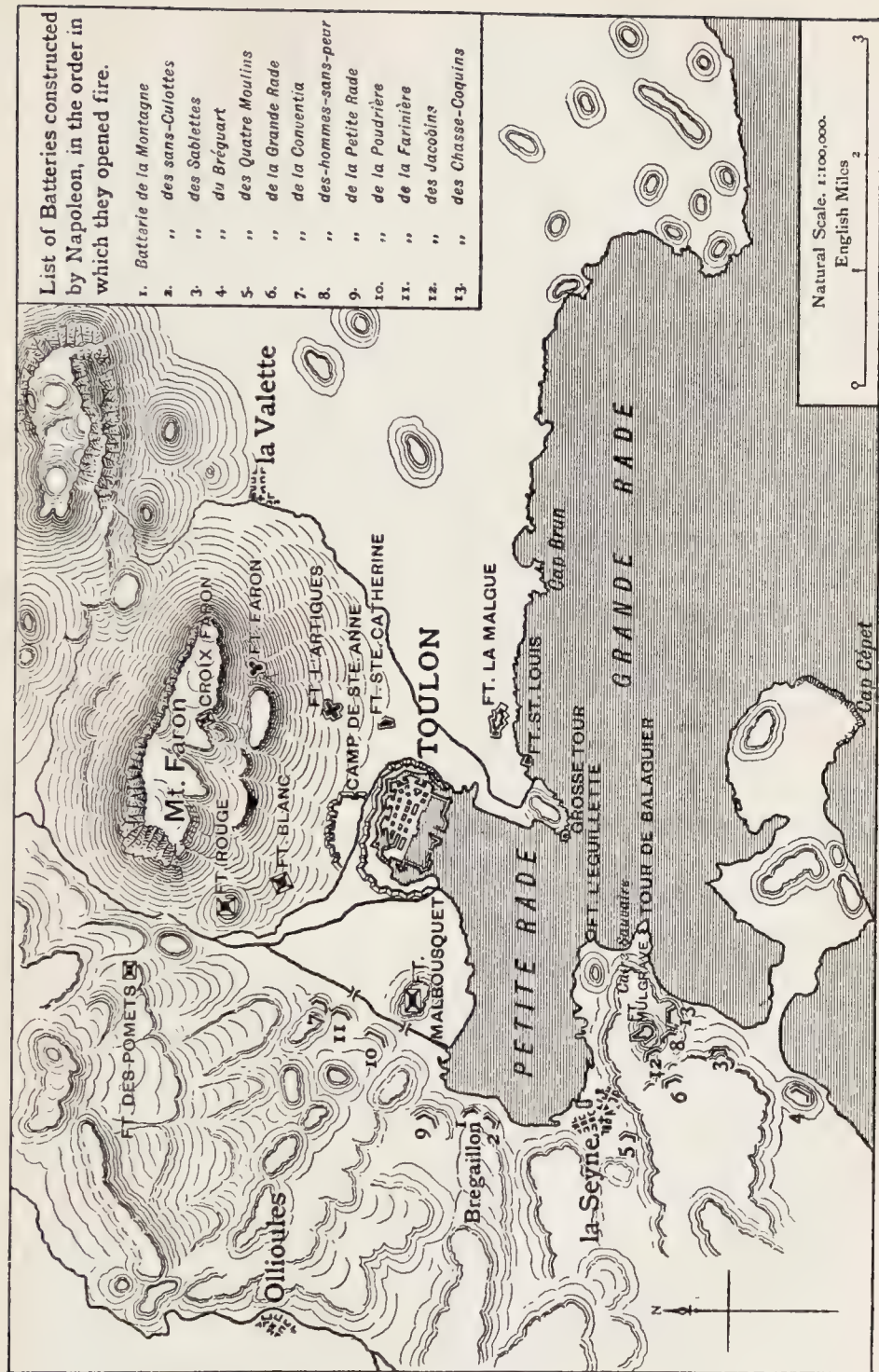
1793 1st-16th October. Battle of Wattignies.  
 December. Defeats of the Vendéans.  
 28th December. Relief of Landau.

THE history of the siege of Toulon has been told so minutely in the works I have enumerated<sup>1</sup> that I need mention only those details that affected the men in whom we are interested. For our purposes we can consider this town of 28,000 inhabitants as being surrounded by a strong enough *enceinte*, with outlying forts on the hills above and around it, and especially on Mont-Faron, which commanded the whole. The inner harbour, La Petite Rade, was of horseshoe form and opened into a larger one, La Grande Rade, which had the same shape. Supported by the English and Spanish fleets, the town was very strong: indeed General du Teil, viewing it as a French stronghold, had pronounced it impregnable. But, when the extent of the works is considered, it is clear that it was insufficiently held, for the Allies had, of course, been unprepared for so marvellous a gift of fortune and had had to scrape together a chance collection of troops. Towards the end of November the garrison stood as follows:

English	.	.	.	.	.	2,114
French	.	.	.	.	.	1,542
Sardinians	.	.	.	.	.	1,584
Neapolitans	.	.	.	.	.	4,832
Spaniards	.	.	.	.	.	6,840
						16,912

There were difficulties about the command, which the English insisted on retaining, and neither the Spaniards nor the Neapolitans behaved well. The besiegers gradually grew in number

<sup>1</sup> See list of authorities at beginning of Chapter V.



III. OPERATIONS IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF TOULON

until by the 11th December they were 38,388 strong. The besieging force was made up mainly from two detachments, one from 'Italie' and one nominally from 'Alpes'. The first was a force which had already in August been collected at Nice and on the coast, under Lapoype's command, in order to guard against a disembarkation from the English and Spanish fleets. It numbered some 3,000 men, and was sent, still under Lapoype, as an *Armée Révolutionnaire* or *Armée auxiliaire* to act against Marseilles and Toulon. On the 6th September it occupied Sollies and Hyères to the east of the town. With it came Victor's battalion, the 5th Bouches-du-Rhône. The other detachment was Carteaux's force, which, as we have seen, took Marseilles. On the 7th September it occupied Ollioules on the north-west of Toulon, and Carteaux placed his head-quarters there. With this force was the volunteer battalion in which Sergeant Junot served. Captain Bonaparte arrived from Marseilles on the 16th September. Lieut.-Colonel Suchet's battalion, the 4th Ardèche, joined before Toulon either in October, as I have noticed, or after the 21st November. Lieutenant Marmont of the Artillery joined from 'Alpes' on the 2nd December and General of Brigade Masséna on the 16th December.

At first Carteaux and Lapoype were independent of one another, and the difficulties of communication aggravated this state of things. On the 4th September, however, the Representatives Escudié, Fréron, Barras, Gasparin, Roubaud, and Albitte, nominated Carteaux to command the whole force, an order that the stiff-necked Lapoype chose to disregard as much as possible. I name the six Representatives because Barras' account makes it seem as if he had been a sort of director in the South: for example, he alleges that it was he that gave Carteaux the command of the detachment from 'Alpes'. In reality, it was the Representatives with 'Alpes', Dubois-Crancé and his colleagues, that dispatched Carteaux with orders issued by Dubois-Crancé himself. By the 7th September Carteaux had, with reinforcements, 7,923 men. Now Carteaux and Lapoype most heartily despised one another. Lapoype, a *ci-devant* Marquis and a General of Brigade before the Revolution, was disgusted to find himself under the ignorant, coarse braggart Carteaux, who in his turn despised and denounced the ex-noble, a mere *général de toilette* only fit to make love to 'Muscadines'. Carteaux



really believed he could take the place straightway by assault and, utterly ignorant of the range of guns, thought he could sweep the harbour with batteries whose fire could not even reach the sea. Lapoype, better instructed, also believed in the possibility of assault and determined to try an attack without informing his superior. Captain Bonaparte had taken command of the artillery, *vice* Dommartin wounded at the affair at Ollioules, and he proposed to force the fleet of the enemy to draw off from the place by seizing the projecting promontory on the south of the harbour, erecting batteries there, and bombarding the fleet. The Representatives agreed, but Carteaux carried out the plan in a manner to be expected from such a man. The final attack was made by De La Borde (who was to command the Emperor's Guard), with too weak a force, and the enemy, with their attention called to the importance of the point, not only drove off the French, but established strong works there. The stroke had failed, said Bonaparte, and a regular siege would be necessary.

While Bonaparte was aiming at the mouth of the harbour, Lapoype struck at the high apex of the works covering the town inland. He was to have taken the northern promontory, opposite to that which De la Borde had attacked, but on the night of the 30th September he started with Lieut.-Colonel Victor's and another volunteer battalion, and some companies, formed in three columns, to attack Mont Faron itself, rising high above and to the north of the town. Victor, with the right column, his own battalion and two companies of regulars, covered by the rest of the force, climbed the hill, 1,800 feet high, by Le Pas de la Masque, where a zigzag path enabled one man at a time to gain the summit.<sup>1</sup> Access was so difficult that the garrison had thought it sufficient to place a picket of sixty men at this point, and these, taken by surprise, fell back on the redoubt at the top, the Croix-Faron of the French (the Stone Redoubt of the English), and fled down hill. Then came Lapoype's mistake, for, leaving Victor with some 1,200 or 1,500 men to hold the post, he went back to glory over Carteaux. His success, however, was to be like that of Colley at Majuba, for the enemy at once struck back with a strong force, when the volunteers, many of whom were in action for the first time, found with horror that 'they are

<sup>1</sup> Delavoye, *Life of Thomas Graham, Lord Lynedoch*, London, Richardson, 1880. See pp. 61, 73-4, 79.

firing shot', and fled in wild confusion, losing many men amongst the rocks. Victor covered the retreat with his own men and was fortunate enough to be praised by both sides. Graham, who gives a full account of the recapture, says, 'The commander, a M. Victor, is said to have been killed. He was reckoned a good officer, and all his dispositions that day were in the style of a man who understood his business.' The Representatives also said he had behaved splendidly and on the 2nd October he was promoted Colonel Adjutant-General. Could Lapoype have kept the post, the town might well have fallen.

The siege dragged on for some time under Carteaux without marked event. Lapoype had been playing much the same part as he had done in the *Armée d'Italie*, trying to damage his commander and to get his place. On the 15th October, the day after Carteaux had to his own great glorification beaten back a sortie, Lapoype succeeded in an attack on the promontory on his side, from which, however, he was driven off the same evening. Carteaux, as indignant with him as Brunet had been, took advantage of this check, following that on Mont Faron, and removed him from his command, which was given to Labarre, but, much to the indignation of the Commander-in-Chief, this was watered down by the Representatives and Lapoype was only sent to Lyons to supervise the dispatch of reinforcements, whence he returned about the 23rd October. The army was now much strengthened, for the arrival in the South of the garrison of Valenciennes enabled the *Armée des Alpes* to send up battalions hitherto retained in the Rhône valley to guard against revolts. These strengthened the right or western division, while the *Armée d'Italie*, relieved from pressure by the withdrawal of the enemy from its front, sent up a large increase to the left or eastern division. The position of Bonaparte was improving, for on the 29th September the Representatives proposed to the Minister that he should be promoted to give him authority over others, and on the 18th October he received his brevet as Lieut.-Colonel, after which he signed as 'Commandant l'artillerie'. The large increase to his strength raised Carteaux to the seventh heaven of delight: when a rumour had spread that Monseigneur, the Comte d'Artois, had entered Toulon (a thing the English would have prevented), the General had exclaimed that he would not yield his place to the 'Père

éternel', and now he told the Minister that the rapidity with which he would conquer these scoundrels would show what a true *sans-culotte* he was, and would justify him from all the attacks which he knew were being made on him. Alas for his vanity, far from a god, a very inferior mortal was to displace him! So high had he stood in estimation at Paris that on the 13th September he had been nominated Commander-in-Chief of 'Italie', although Dumerbion continued to exercise the command there. Now the Representatives turned against him, much influenced by the savage criticisms of Bonaparte. Carteaux would not realize the importance of the attack on the western promontory and, what was worse, the Jacobins with the army began to doubt his soundness: he complained that the artillery did not obey him, that Bonaparte (supported by the younger Robespierre, be it noted) did everything opposed to what he wanted: he himself disputed the authority of the Representatives and declared himself to be under the rod of the Convention. Realizing that this might not sound well, he added that he liked being there, but this surely was 'suspect'. Also, when the wife of a Commander-in-Chief signs orders to the army, even the truest *sans-culotte* may pause. Finally all the Representatives demanded the recall of Carteaux, and on the 23rd October the Minister wrote ordering him to go to Nice to take up his command of 'Italie' (which, it will be remembered, was under the temporary command of Dumerbion), and professing that the difficulties about the command rendered the position painful for the public good and for himself as well.<sup>1</sup> Carteaux was naturally deeply disgusted, especially when he knew that his successor was to be Doppet, whom we have seen in command before Lyons, and who, he declared truly enough, was destitute of military talents. He himself was, he said, taken away from the siege just when he was about to bring it to a successful end. If he had only been allowed to do that, he would have resigned and have asked to be nothing more than a simple volunteer. No doubt he knew also that Lapoype had nearly been recommended for the command, and would probably have got it had not his wife and daughter been inside Toulon. Might he not try

<sup>1</sup> Chuquet, *Jeunesse de Napoléon*, iii. 195; Wallon, *Rep.*, iii. 50. The dates of this and of other appointments about this time are given differently by various writers.



to save them from the dangers of an assault, and was not he a noble? Carteaux, in fact, could say nothing too bad of him: still, the order of the Minister had to be obeyed, and Carteaux left for Nice on the 6th November, while, as if to add to his bitterness, Lapoype took temporary command from the 7th to the 12th November. During the few days he commanded, says Napoleon, he merited the esteem of the army.

Doppet arrived on the 9th or 10th November from the command of the 'Alpes', with all the credit of the capture of Lyons; but, to do him justice, he recognized his unfitness for the post he was called to. With extraordinary insight for a man with his history he had told the Minister, 'I do not believe I have knowledge for such an important siege, for, to make the army victorious, it will not suffice for me to march'. Napoleon had a bitter memory of him, declaring him an enemy of all talent and so thoroughly Jacobin as to believe that, when an English shell blew up the magazine of a battery, it was the work of aristocrats. Still, Doppet nearly took Toulon, for on the 15th November a chance affair, in which the attack increased in volume, nearly placed the western promontory in his hands. Bonaparte, urging him to push on the attack to the uttermost, because it would cost less to do so than to withdraw, received orders to put himself at the head of the troops. Just as he was about to penetrate by the gorge of the work at which he was aiming, Doppet, alarmed by seeing one of his A.D.C. killed at his side, sounded the retreat and the men drew back. Bonaparte in fury, his face all bloody from a slight wound, told him that 'the . . . who had the retreat sounded has made us lose Toulon', whilst the soldiers, remembering the former pursuits of Carteaux and Doppet, asked, 'When will they stop sending painters and doctors to command us?'

Even before his arrival at Toulon, however, Doppet had been replaced, for on the 3rd November he had been nominated to command the Armée des Pyrénées Orientales, and he received the decree on the day he reached Toulon. To succeed him the *Comité* had appointed to command both the Armée d'Italie and the force before Toulon an officer of the old army, General Dugommier,<sup>1</sup> who on the 15th September had relieved Sérurier

<sup>1</sup> Général Jean-Coquillz Dugommier (1738-94), see Chuquet, *Dugommier*; Michaud, *Biog. des Cont.*, ii, 1459-60.

in the command of the left wing of 'Italie' at Utelle. There Dugommier was in his turn relieved by Masséna. On the 16th November he arrived at Ollioules, when Doppet handed over the command and started next day for his new post. Under Dugommier the army before Toulon took real shape. A Creole<sup>1</sup> born in Guadeloupe, he had distinguished himself in the wars in the islands against the English, and had attained the rank of Lieut.-Colonel. Thinking himself slighted, he retired to Martinique, whence he was drawn by the revolutionary movement and sent by the Antilles as a Deputy to the Convention. His ardour pleased Marat, who got him made General of Brigade. He was appointed to the Armée d'Italie, but he expected to be sent out to the West Indies and therefore it came that he did not join 'Italie' until September 1793. There he distinguished himself on the 19th and the 22nd October. Tall and grey-headed, he was now 65, but full of vigour and 'patriot' enough to win confidence from the Representatives, although he possessed none of the violence and animosity that so often characterized men of his party. Bonaparte always retained a grateful remembrance of him, saying: 'He had all the qualities of an old soldier; extremely brave in person, he liked brave men and was loved by them: he was kind, although quick-tempered; very active, just, had the military *coup d'œil*, and coolness and obstinacy in combat'. In his will made at Saint-Helena the Emperor spoke of him as 'my friend'<sup>2</sup> and left 1,000,000 francs to his son or grandson as a 'token of remembrance for the marks of esteem, affection, and friendship given us by that brave and intrepid General'. For it was under his orders that Bonaparte had directed the siege of Toulon and commanded the artillery. The time for painters, doctors, and charlatans was over, and a soldier took command.

Now for the first time the two divisions were really welded together. In leaving the 'Alpes', Doppet had taken with him the younger General Du Teil, of the artillery, appointed on the 31st October to command his arm before Toulon. Bonaparte himself had asked the *Comité* to send a General of artillery to overcome the ignorant staff whom he had to bargain with and lecture, and Du Teil, detained at Marseilles, joined at Ollioules the day before Doppet left. Doppet took him round by the

<sup>1</sup> i.e. born in the West Indies of white parents.

<sup>2</sup> *Corr. Nap.* xxxii. 486; Bourrienne, English Edition, iii. 553.

batteries and was both astonished and pleased to find that the experienced old General fully approved all that the young Bonaparte had done. Du Teil, who had entered the artillery very young in 1748, is described by Napoleon as knowing nothing about his arm, but he seems to have been an experienced officer who, although he was old and soon became so crippled that he had to be carried into the batteries, still took a greater part in the work than it suited the Emperor to remember.<sup>1</sup> Dugommier brought Lieut.-Colonel Victor over from the left to the right wing, where that Adjutant-General became acquainted with Lieut.-Colonel Bonaparte, who came every morning to his quarters to take him to visit the batteries, and friendly relations were soon established between them. On the 2nd December Lieutenant Marmont of the artillery joined the left wing with two companies of artillery from the Armée des Alpes, when Bonaparte, who had seen him before at Dijon (where Marmont was a cadet in January 1792), remembered him and, remarking his zeal, soon made much use of him. Lieut.-Colonel Suchet's volunteer battalion also seems to have been with the right wing, so that Bonaparte, Marmont, Suchet, and Victor, with Junot, were all serving together.

Both Dugommier and Du Teil realized the value of Bonaparte's advice, and the young Lieut.-Colonel soon took the same ascendancy over the old General as he already had over the Representatives when Carteaux had complained that to attack the head of the artillery was to attack the Representatives themselves. Although the army had been reinforced, the situation was always serious, and on the 30th November the garrison made a sortie with 2,350 men which broke through the line of investment, routed the young levies, and almost reached the siege park, but they were driven back, leaving the Governor of Toulon, General O'Hara, a prisoner. Bonaparte was one of the officers praised on this occasion. A return stroke was made by the French at the formidable battery of Malbousquet, where Suchet distinguished himself, but the attack failed. At last Dugommier was ready for his attack, for he had by this time 38,388 men, more than double the strength of the garrison, a superiority in numbers for which he had asked. It was deter-

<sup>1</sup> Général Jean du Teil (1738-1820). See Baron Joseph du Teil, *Une famille militaire*, with portrait, p. 63.



mined to adopt Bonaparte's plan, for, unlike Carteaux, Dugommier saw the importance of driving off what he called the 'remparts maritimes' of the town, the fleets. On the right the main attempt was to be made on the promontory and on Fort Mulgrave, or as it was called by the French 'Redoute anglaise' or the 'Petit Gibraltar'. A false attack was to be made on the eastern promontory, while Lapoype was to take up again his favourite plan of an assault on Mont Faron. On the 17th December the assault was delivered during a violent storm. Of the four columns directed on Fort Mulgrave, Victor led one. It was probably the success of his assault of Mont Faron which had made Dugommier bring him over from the left, and he had already retaken the Batterie des Sablettes a few days after it had been captured by the besieged garrison. To-day the works were reached and a desperate struggle began, in which Victor had the lower part of his stomach torn open by a case-shot and was believed to be dead. At one time the attack was repulsed and Dugommier was in despair: he knew that he was playing for his life and that defeat meant death for him, as it had for so many commanders. Just as the columns moved off he had gone up to Colonel Victor and had whispered in his ear, 'We must take the redoubt, or—', passing his hand over his neck in a manner only too significant. Indeed, he was between two fires, for, whilst one set of Representatives had pressed for the assault, Barras (who poses as the real captor of the town), with his colleague Fréron had declared the siege to be hopeless and had advocated withdrawal, so that failure would have been doubly criminal.<sup>1</sup>

Retaking courage, Dugommier led on the fourth or reserve column, at the head of which was Bonaparte, and at three in the morning of the 17th December the two entered the work by an embrasure, and the first of the forts was at last taken. The day before, Bonaparte had had his horse killed under him by a gunshot from Fort Mulgrave and had been bruised by his fall. Now the English gunners of the garrison stuck to their pieces till cut down, and one of them wounded Bonaparte on the thigh, probably with a 'searcher',<sup>2</sup> so that, as he told the crew of the

<sup>1</sup> Cottin, *Toulon*, 271-2, makes the wicked English forge the letter. Compare, Chuquet, *Dugommier*, 87-8, on the depression caused by the length of the siege.

<sup>2</sup> 'Un coup de lance', *Corr. Nap.*, xxix. 17.

*Bellerophon* on his way to Saint-Helena, his first wound was from the hand of an Englishman.<sup>1</sup> Much remained to be done, for other works were in the rear, and Bonaparte gave Captain Marmont, who had come up with the column of De La Borde, the charge of the guns taken in the redoubt, with orders to turn them on the harbour ; work which was done under the heavy fire of the enemy's vessels until three that afternoon. Meantime, far away on the east, Lapoype had advanced in three columns, the right and centre of which scaled the heights, but failed to capture the highest redoubt, the Croix-Faron, though they remained on the summit of the hills. Masséna had arrived the day before the assault, too late to figure in the detail issued, but, as a volunteer, he marched at the head of the left column, led by Lapoype himself, which drove back the enemy on to the two lower eastern forts, Lartigues and Sainte Catherine.

After the capture of Fort Mulgrave Bonaparte had assured the sceptical Generals that next day, or soon afterwards, they would sup in Toulon ; and his words came true. The Allies had determined to abandon the town ; as many of the French vessels as possible were brought out or burnt, the forts were gradually evacuated, and, although the Neapolitan troops in a panic deserted their posts prematurely, by daylight on the morning of the 19th December all the garrison were on board ship without the loss of a man, and the fleet sailed for the islands of Hyères. It carried off 14,877 men, women, and children of the the inhabitants of Toulon, who had crowded on board to escape from the wrath of the Republicans. At 9 a.m. on the 19th December the besiegers entered the town, and much pillaging took place, which Dugommier did his best to repress. Then the Representatives began their vile work and, although practically all the Royalists had been carried off by the enemy, private animosity found enough victims for the guillotine. Needless to say, the regular troops took no part in the work of bloodshed. From the haste with which the evacuation had been carried out the eventual loss to the French in ships and in stores was not so great as had been feared. The unfortunate city was left in its ashes, losing even its name, and becoming 'Port de la Montagne'.

The immediate and complete success of Bonaparte's plan has

<sup>1</sup> He may have been referring to the slight wound he had received on November 15 : cf. p. 116.

prevented the usual denigratory criticism of his acts, but some remark is permissible. The plan was that to be expected from an artillery officer, who knew the difficulties of a formal siege of the fortress, with whose strength he was well acquainted: indeed its merit was so obvious that it was only the crass stupidity and conceit of Carteaux that had prevented its immediate adoption. But what is remarkable, and what made the plan a Napoleonic one, was that its originator from the first counted on the immediate fall of the place if the fleets were once driven off. For this there was no material necessity; the place could have resisted, relying on its own resources, and for this we have the opinion of Marmont, an artillery officer, who had seen the interior of the place, and who wrote probably after he had discussed the matter with the Emperor. Once the promontory were seized, he says, the garrison could not escape; but still Toulon, though not so strong as several of the northern towns, could have defended itself for four months and have cost the Republicans 15,000 men. What might have happened in those months? 'I can assure you', wrote Galon-Boyer to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, 'that, if Toulon had held another fortnight, we should have been forced to raise the siege.' Already two of the Representatives had advised that course, and Bonaparte says his plan, even when close to success, excited general disapproval. The army itself, a force hastily scrambled together, was in a bad state, in a district stripped of supplies, half starved, and many of its troops were undisciplined. Could the Allies have brought up a relieving force, or have pressed back the enfeebled armies of 'Alpes' and 'Italie', Toulon would have been saved. How tightly strained was the situation in the south of France is shown by the fact that on the 17th December, the day of the assault, the Minister was ordering Doppet, then the commander of 'Pyrenées Orientales', to retain only 15,000 men, and those the worst of his force, and to send all the rest before Toulon. Whilst the Republican armies were attacking Italy on the east and Spain on the west, Toulon was, as it were, a lance-head piercing the weak connecting flank.

Successful resistance there would have been a call to the whole of the Royalist sympathizers in the South; and every moment Toulon held out was of increasing danger to the Republic. It was not so much on the material, but on the moral, effect of the with-



drawal of the fleet that Bonaparte rightly counted. On the other hand the resolution of the Allies to abandon the place can hardly be blamed, and it is necessary to avoid bringing our modern ideas into the consideration of the situation. Were such a gift to be received from Fortune in any war now, the telegraph would at once be at work, calling for reinforcements and explaining the position, while fast steamers would be bearing troops to the important point. Not merely were the means of communication slow, but also the numerous nationalities concerned, the differing interests of England and Spain, and the struggle for command, all enervated the defence. The conduct of the Neapolitans, and even that of the Spaniards, was so bad that the English commanders may have had good cause for fearing the result of a further assault. Had Austria given the 5,000 troops for which she was asked, or had they even been on their way, a different resolution might have been taken. It would, by the way, be interesting to know how far the garrison understood the real position on Mont Faron: they seem to have believed that it had been lost, but what appears to be the most careful French account describes Lapoype as failing to take any works, and as only retaining his ground on the heights.

Rewards were showered on the men with whom we are concerned. The Representatives nominated Bonaparte General of Brigade on the 22nd December, a promotion confirmed by the *Conseil* on the 6th February 1794, and he soon went to command the artillery of 'Italie'. At the end of the successful assault Dugommier had embraced the wounded Victor, and promised him promotion; and on the 20th December Victor was nominated General of Brigade. Masséna, who had had so small a part in the siege, had won praise by the manner in which on the day after the assault he had entered Fort Lartigues and had turned the guns on the enemy: on the 20th December the Representatives nominated him as General of Division, so that he gained more than any of our group. Two days later Dugommier nominated him commandant of the place and forts of Toulon. Marmont, if Gavard is right, had been made Captain on the 12th December, but one cannot help suspecting this to be a mistake, and that the promotion came after he had distinguished himself during the assault. Junot, who had come as a Sergeant of Volunteers, had already, before the

27th October, become *sous-lieutenant*, and remained attached to the staff of the artillery. Then he was taken by Bonaparte as A.D.C.

It is interesting to consider what effect the siege of Toulon had on the relations of Bonaparte with his future Marshals and Generals. M. Chuquet has dealt with this subject on a wider range than we need take. We may assume that both Augereau and Masséna, during the short time they were in or by the town, had nothing to do with their future master, but probably they heard something of him, although not enough to prepare them for his rise to fame in 1796. As for Lieut.-Colonel Suchet, Napoleon, on his return from Elba in 1815, wrote to him, 'You know the esteem which I have always felt for you since the siege of Toulon.' But this esteem must have been much dissembled, for, instead of receiving any speedy mark of it in the campaigns of Italy, the promotion of the future Marshal was so long delayed as to occasion remark. Also the honourable mention of Suchet's conduct at the repulse of the sortie of the 30th November, given in the Saint Helena writings, an incident, I think, not mentioned elsewhere, reads as if the Emperor were thinking more of the Suchet of Spain than of the Suchet of Toulon. This is more likely, because Suchet himself seems to have carried away no good will to Bonaparte: when he came to command 'Italie' in 1796, Suchet declared that he had no other reputation than that acquired at the siege of Toulon of a good 'No. 1', or commander of a gun, and as a General was only known to the Parisians, a spiteful saying going to show the truth of the legend that Bonaparte did load a gun himself, thereby catching the itch, a disease prevalent enough amongst the harassed warriors of the Republic. Victor is said to have been on terms of friendship here with Bonaparte at the time when both held the same rank, and this may be true, for, if his promotion to General of Division in 1797 was natural, his elevation to the Marshalate in 1807 seems to require some explanation. His highest post had been that of Chief of the Staff to Lannes and, though that Marshal exerted himself in his favour, one imagines some further reason for his promotion. Yet Victor had been strongly opposed to Bonaparte's elevation to the Consulate: he had been harshly treated in 1814, but even so his hostile attitude in 1815 is remarkable. Among the men with whom

we are here concerned, it was Marmont and Junot that became the personal friends of Bonaparte and rose by his favour. Wellington at Vimiero intercepted Junot's bâton and Junot, after long years of honourable and devoted attachment to the Emperor, in 1812, already touched by insanity, did much to injure the campaign by his inaction at the Valoutina. Still, he died as he had lived, a faithful friend. To Marmont Napoleon gave everything, riches, a Duchy, the bâton, and close friendship, considering him much as a son. In the hour when his benefactor tottered to his fall, Marmont, meaning only to betray him, delivered France helpless to her enemies.

The consideration of the real position occupied by Bonaparte during the siege of Toulon, although not strictly part of my subject, still cannot well be passed over here. The point has been confused by some ignorant writing, and also it has not always been treated with perfect good faith, while the civilian mind has been puzzled by the comparatively small mention of Bonaparte in official documents as compared with the task assigned to him. When a man joins a besieging force as Captain and leaves in three months to return to his original army as a general officer, to command its artillery, and when his subsequent career proves his fitness for such promotion, officers will find no difficulty in believing that he must have played a very prominent part of which his original inferior rank prevented full official mention. Also, excellent as was Bonaparte's advice, that does not diminish in the least the credit due to Dugommier for adopting it. Rehoboam had excellent advice, but did not follow it; and Carteaux had the same advice from Bonaparte as Dugommier had, but failed to appreciate it. Bonaparte at first commanded all the artillery of the army, but from the time when the siege took regular form under Dugommier, his position was that of second-in-command of the artillery, and especially of that of the right attack or right wing, under Du Teil, who commanded all the artillery of the army. Du Teil was far from being inactive: even when so crippled as to be unable to ride or even to walk, he had himself carried into the batteries, and when he wanted more artillery officers, it was because, on account of his own infirmities, his 'comrade Bonaparte' would be worn down the more easily. At the left attack, or left or eastern wing, Sugny commanded the artillery, under Du Teil, with Dupin



as second-in-command there.<sup>1</sup> At the end of the siege Dugommier and Du Teil received all the proper official recognition of their services, the latter General being said to have served well at the siege, to have merited the esteem and attachment of true Republicans, and to have fully performed the duty of commanding-in-chief the artillery, whilst Bonaparte, when promoted General of Brigade, was only said to have satisfied the Representative of his zeal and intelligence in contributing to the surrender of the town. All this was most right and officially correct, but then came in, as is usual in such cases, the private and personal praise, intended to tell in the future. 'Expressions fail me', wrote Du Teil to the Minister, 'to paint the merit of Bonaparte; much science, as much intelligence, and too great bravery, that is a faint sketch of the virtues of this rare officer. It is for you, Minister, to consecrate them to the glory of the Republic.' Dugommier on his side, following the first fortunes of his subordinate with care, warned the *Comité*, 'Recompense and promote this young man, for, if he were treated with ingratitude, he would rise alone.' And if it be said that this sort of half-menace comes to us only from Napoleon, it has a curious resemblance to the last words of Du Teil's authentic letter.

The whole of Barras' mendacious account may practically be set aside as far as Bonaparte is concerned, for not only is his description of the future Emperor's servile attitude towards him at variance with all we know of Bonaparte's conduct towards others at this period (witness his violent previous behaviour in Corsica), but also we can catch the Representative lying when we come to any precise statement. For instance, there is a well-known anecdote that the Emperor, when on horseback, dropped a paper, which was picked up and returned to him by a young Lieutenant. 'Thanks, *Captain*', said Napoleon, not looking at him. 'In what regiment, your Majesty?' replied the sharp youth, when the Emperor smiled and gave the promotion. Barras tries to turn this to his own purpose, and represents a similar incident between him and Bonaparte. '"You are Captain", I replied', and this happened at their first interview, which

<sup>1</sup> Du Teil, 405-7. See, however, Jung, *Bonaparte*, ii. 340, which makes Brulé command the artillery of the eastern division and puts Sugny with Bonaparte on the west. Bonaparte signed as 'le commandant en second de l'artillerie de l'armée-devant-Toulon': Chuquet, *Jeunesse*, iii. 322-4.

occurred before Toulon. Now Bonaparte joined before Toulon on the 16th September, and he had been a Captain from the 6th February 1792. Nor can this refer to any other promotion, for, when Bonaparte was promoted Lieut.-Colonel, it was on the 19th October 1793, for services rendered at the siege. The truth is that, besides slandering the man who had saved France from all his vile crew, Barras had two other motives in concocting his account of Toulon. He wished to recall, even to exaggerate the position he and the other Representatives had held when they had acted as so many irresponsible dictators. What an extraordinary attitude they adopted, while preaching equality, is shown by his own action in attending the dinner given by the patriots to the Representatives after the siege. On arrival Barras found the hosts awaiting him and a place kept vacant for him. This was not respectful enough, and he pointed out that the Representatives ought to dine separately at a table, 'à un autre étage', where, undisturbed by the crowd, those majestic personages could discuss the affairs of the Republic. Then also Barras, in dwelling on the important part he professed to have played, had to conceal the awkward fact that both he and Fréron had advised the abandonment, not only of the siege, but also of the whole of Provence. The army, they said, should fall back behind the Durance and there wait till next year, when with fine weather it would advance and throw the Allies into the sea that had vomited them up. That this would give time for the Allies to get over their main difficulty, and increase the garrison to a proper strength, did not enter into the views of these two men. Also this counsel of despair was given on the 1st December when the timid, servile Captain Bonaparte was declaring himself certain of victory. Later, the two Representatives denied the authenticity of this letter, and it seemed best to hush up the matter, for Barras declared in the Convention that the English alone could be the authors of it, although he and Fréron suggested that the counter-revolutionists wished to get them recalled before they went to Toulon. This is too absurd, for, intent as the Convention was on the success of the siege, they would never have abandoned it on the faith of one letter; but Barras' attempted explanation is fatal to his claim to have directed the siege from the first. M. Cottin decides that the phraseology of the letter is obviously

English, but he does not explain why the counter-revolutionists, who were apparently able to get such a document read in the Convention, wished to procure the recall of two Representatives who were not with the besiegers, and whose advice, therefore, was certain not to be acted on without reference to the commander and to the Representatives actually before Toulon. If the Convention professed to accept the disclaimer of Barras, it seems certain that the *Comité*, a better informed body, did not, for he acknowledges the coldness of the reception he met with from them when he presented himself as the conqueror of Toulon. Far from figuring as the leading personage throughout the siege, Barras only came to Ollioules on the 26th November, returning to Marseilles on the 28th: then on the 14th December he came, not to the right, where Bonaparte was, but to Lapoype's division on the left. Salicetti was the only Representative who remained present throughout the siege. Indeed, on the 21st November Barras was writing from Marseilles to the *Comité*: 'I only know the positions before Toulon imperfectly, I count much on Generals Dugommier and Duteil; although I do not know the first, his correspondence reveals to me a man of war with large military views.'

While Barras is more than 'suspect' in this matter, there is no reason for distrusting the testimony of Marmont, who in his memoirs is ready enough to cite any faults, I do not say always unfairly, of the man he had abandoned. According to that Marshal, from the time that Bonaparte proved the incapacity of Carteaux, 'nothing was done but by his orders; everything was submitted to him. He prepared all the returns of the artillery stores required, indicated the means of supplying them, put everything in motion, and in a week obtained over the Representatives an ascendancy of which no idea can be given.' This is corroborated by Carteaux's complaint that to attack the commandant of the artillery was to attack the Representatives themselves. When Dugommier replaced Carteaux, Bonaparte, says Marmont, at once assumed the same influence over him.

Other writers have taken a curious line in this matter. Dugommier in his report of the last bombardment said, 'The fire of our batteries, directed with the greatest skill, showed the enemy what their fate would be.' Who directed the batteries? says M. Duruy, going on, 'Do not ask it from MM. Krebs and



Moris, who do not cite this report. Still less ask M. Jung, who on the contrary cites it,<sup>1</sup> but carefully expunges the unfortunate passage.' 'It is true', continues M. Duruy, 'that Bonaparte is not named' (and he might have added that officially the report would refer to Du Teil) 'but consider that General's letter, which I have already given, with its extraordinary praise! Why then has M. le Colonel Jung, and after him have MM. Krebs and Moris, for whom the Archives de la Guerre have no secrets, had the bad luck to let this letter escape them?'

Now that the siege was finished, the Armée de Toulon was broken up. Just after the place had fallen a force had arrived from the Armée des Pyrénées Orientales under two Adjutant-Generals, Boissier and Colonel Augereau. Dugommier praised these troops, who rejoined their army. As for the besieging force, it was divided between the three armies that had supplied its troops, Pyrénées Orientales, 'Italie' and 'Alpes'. Dugommier, like the honest soldier he was, had been disgusted with the slaughter carried on in the town. On the 24th December he was writing to the Minister, asking for a successor; he did not like to put on paper all the reasons which influenced him, but his meaning was plain enough. What he would have wished, as he told Dumerbion, was to return to his post as a member of the Convention, and his reasons show the deplorable effect of the Jacobin measures on the Generals. He, the successful General, who had been much supported by the Representatives, and who had just won such a triumph, saw only that he had escaped from the storm and the shoals on which his career might have foundered. 'The work of a General is to-day too dangerous and subordinated to too many overmastering circumstances.' Before the place fell he had complained that so many heads possessed authority, whilst it was the head of the poor General alone which answered for a defeat. The *Comité*, however, had too much sense to let such a man be lost, and on the 16th January 1794 they nominated him to the command of the Armée des Pyrénées Orientales, though even then it was only to replace temporarily the charlatan Doppet, who had fallen ill. Dugommier would have liked to take all his troops with him to his new command, but the *Conseil* distributed the force as follows: 10,000 men were to form the garrison of Toulon, and 3,000 that of Lyons; 6,000

<sup>1</sup> Jung, *Bonaparte*, ii. 392-3; Barras, i. lix-lx.

or 8,000 were to be kept in Toulon for an expedition to Corsica ; 8,400 were to rejoin 'Italie', and only 10,000 or 10,500 to pass to 'Pyrénées Orientales'. Then Dugommier naturally intended to pick the best troops for his own army ; but, much to his disgust, the Representatives stopped this and made their own selection. As for Bonaparte, now General of Brigade, Dugommier had ordered him to follow him to the 'Pyrénées Orientales', but on the 26th December the Representatives had instructed him to make as quickly as possible an inspection of the coast from the mouth of the Rhône to that of the Var, where an attack by the fleets of the enemy was feared. He took with him Junot as A.D.C., and Captain Marmont, who should have gone to 'Pyrénées Occidentales', but who preferred to remain on the staff of the artillery with Bonaparte and with an army more likely to play a prominent part. Soon the whole coast became like an iron foundry, furnaces for heating shot being placed in the forts. Bonaparte was so liberal in his demands that the authorities at Paris had to request him to be more moderate, and to remember that other armies had to be supplied. Marmont says that Bonaparte was second in command of the artillery to an old General Dujard, whilst Napoleon reverses the positions. Masséna, now General of Division, exercised the command of Toulon given him by Dumerbion until the 15th January 1794, when he rejoined the Armée d'Italie. As for General of Brigade Victor, Dugommier had wished to have him with his new command, and as soon as he was sufficiently recovered from his wounds, about the end of January 1794, he started for the Pyrénées Orientales. I think Suchet's volunteer battalion remained at Toulon ; at least I cannot trace it with 'Italie' for some time to come, but it certainly went later to that army. By these changes Bonaparte, Marmont, and Masséna, with Junot, went to serve with 'Italie', where Sérurier already was, whilst Victor joined 'Pyrénées Orientales', to serve with Augereau, Bessières, Lannes, and Pérignon.

*Note by Editor.*

Here, as stated in the Preface, I have interrupted the author's account of the armies of Italy and of the Alps in order to continue the history of Dugommier, Augereau, and Victor in 'Pyrénées Orientales'. To complete 'Italie' and 'Alpes' up to 1796, before

dealing with the armies of the Pyrenees, would have entailed a far greater dislocation of the story than is caused by the course I have adopted. For the war with Spain was concluded in August 1795 and Augereau, Victor, Lannes, and Bessièrès then joined the Armée d'Italie from Spain, and took part in Schérer's campaign of November 1795. We shall return to 'Alpes' and 'Italie' in Chapter XIII.



L'ARMÉE DES PYRÉNÉES OCCIDENTALES AND  
L'ARMÉE DES PYRÉNÉES ORIENTALES

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## VIII

### THE SPANISH INVASION

(October 1792 to December 1793)

Composition of the armies of the Pyrénées. French and Spanish leaders. Moncey, Lannes, Pérignon, Bessières, and Augereau. Spanish advance in the western Pyrenees.

#### CONTEMPORARY EVENTS

- 1793 April and May. Successes of the Vendéans.  
29th May. Revolt of Lyons.  
27th September. Revolt of Toulon.  
9th October. Lyons reoccupied.  
15th-16th October. Battle of Wattignies.  
December. Defeat of the Vendéans at Le Mans and Savenay.  
19th December. Toulon reoccupied.

THE Armée des Pyrénées formed, as we have seen, on the 1st October 1792, was at first commanded by Servan, who had been Minister for War from the 9th May to the 12th June 1792. War was declared against Spain on the 9th March 1793, and on the 30th April the division into two armies was carried out. The 'Pyrénées Orientales' covered the district from the mouth of the Rhône to the left bank of the Garonne; thence the 'Pyrénées Occidentales' extended to the left bank of the Gironde, where its district touched that of the 'Côtes de la Rochelle', whose history we have been following.

The Armée des Pyrénées Occidentales is the least interesting of the forces of the Republic. It gave one Marshal only, Moncey, to the Empire, and he was little employed after 1794 until the evil days began for Napoleon in 1808. It had neither the disasters nor the triumphs that fell to its sister force, and, after the conclusion of peace with Spain in 1794, it practically disappeared. However praiseworthy its career, it cannot be said to have formed any school or to have provided any important lesson. Its historian, Beaulac, modestly found 234 small pages sufficient for his valuable work, and of those pages a good part is most properly devoted to its struggles for supplies.



More deserving of attention is the Armée des Pyrénées Orientales, not only because five future Marshals served in it—Augereau, Bessières, Lannes, Pérignon, and Victor—but also because, after its campaigns were finished, almost all its troops, with Schérer their commander, went to the Armée d'Italie, only six months before Bonaparte took command of that army. Now these troops were experienced in warfare of the same nature as that waged, up to that time, by 'Italie', so that 'Italie', looking with disfavour on the detachments that arrived from La Vendée with so much to learn, welcomed the men of 'Pyrénées Orientales' as a valuable reinforcement. Further, of the future Marshals who served with 'Pyrénées Orientales' Pérignon was the only one who did not accompany the troops to 'Italie' in 1795, but he too joined that army in 1799. The names of the Generals of 'Pyrénées Orientales' reappear in Bonaparte's southern campaigns: Sauret, for instance, who was to lead a division in Italy in 1797, and Bon, who was to fall mortally wounded before Acre. Indeed, it was only by chance that General Bonaparte did not accompany his chief, Dugommier, from Toulon to Spain in 1794, when, if he had retained his influence, the course of the war there might have been much altered for good. Just as, say, the Armée de la Moselle may be looked on as having formed a wing of the Armée de Rhin-et-Moselle, so may 'Pyrénées Orientales' be taken as a wing of that Armée d'Italie which was to be hurled to victory by Bonaparte.

We must glance at the organization of the two Pyrenean armies. First as to 'Pyrénées Occidentales'. On the abolition of the original 'Pyrénées' Servan remained in command of this army. In March 1793 it contained 14½ battalions of infantry of the Line, of whom only two, the 20th and the 80th, were regular; a battalion of regular light infantry, the Chasseurs Cantabres, in which Moncey served; 18 *compagnies franches*; and 15 companies of artillery; in all some 10,000 men, besides one regular cavalry regiment, the 18th Dragoons. The grenadier companies of the battalions were almost always formed into separate bodies, an organization that was tried and abandoned in most other armies of the Republic, but was maintained here except during the winter of 1794-5. The volunteer battalions had at first little more than 200 men each, whereas they should have had 574, but in May 1793 they were filled up to a strength of 784 each.

In this year the *amalgame* began, and in September 5 *demi-brigades*, or regiments, were organized, each 2,437 strong and each consisting of three battalions of 812 men. As the war progressed, by the incorporation of new levies into the old cadres and by the formation of eighteen other regiments, the strength of the army rose to 60,000, but it must always be remembered that one third of it was treated as garrison or reserve troops, and these may possibly have been little drilled or armed.

As for cavalry, there were eventually three regiments, the 12th Hussars, 24th Chasseurs<sup>1</sup> and the 18th Dragoons, which alone was of old formation. This arm was unsuited to the country, and could do but little. The regiments must have been very weak, for, although they often had periods of rest in the rear, they lost two-thirds of their horses, mainly from the difficulty of getting forage. It was the same throughout the army, for of 5,000 horses of the military transport, 3,000 died between the 22nd September 1794 and the 19th January 1795. The artillery had to be built up from almost nothing, but it gradually became formidable, receiving pieces from the interior, while 535 guns were captured from the Spaniards. Most of these prizes were fine pieces, but had to be supplied with carriages. Lespinasse, who commanded the artillery, not only turned out the captured guns with carriages, but gradually formed a field-train, a siege-train, and a pontoon-train, and, if sufficient horses could not be obtained to move these three trains, that was one of the annoying details of war. Indeed, instead of the 20,000 horses required for the two artillery trains, only 329 could be collected after the draft to La Vendée in January 1794. Lespinasse also formed companies of armourers, who were especially useful in repairing the muskets captured from the enemy. This army seems to have been the first to organize 'compagnies d'ouvriers', who followed it on the march and constructed temporary bakehouses and other works. In a word, starting with nothing, the army gradually equipped itself and, although at one time its sufferings were great, eventually the supplies in Bayonne were so good that all the troops sent away at the termination of the war were fully equipped there. Moncey must

<sup>1</sup> The 12th Hussars formed from the cavalry *Volontaires des Pyrénées Occidentales*, and, I think, the 24th Chasseurs formed from the *Chasseurs Volontaires de Bayonne*, Susane, *Cav.*, i. 186-7.

have some of the credit for this, and we find him battling manfully for the needs of his men.

Following my custom in this history, I shall, as each future Marshal comes on the scene, give some short account of his early life. In this army we have, as I have said, only one to deal with. Bon-Adrien Jeanot, or Jannot, was born on the 31st July 1754 near Besançon in the province of Franche-Comté. His father was nominally *avocat* at the Parliament of Besançon, but he did not practice, having inherited a property at Moncey. The future Marshal studied at the college of Besançon, and was intended for the Law, but he had three brothers in the army and two of his uncles had been officers, and so it came about that he gave up his course and enlisted at the age of fifteen in the infantry regiment of Périgord, later Conti. At the end of six months, however, he got his father to purchase his discharge. Again he enlisted, this time as a grenadier in the infantry regiment Champagne, on the 15th October 1769. In this corps he made in 1773 what was called a campaign in Brittany, to protect that province from the English, but, as he did not get the rank of officer, which he thought he had earned, he bought his own discharge. He was soon back in the army, and this time he must have had the help of his family, for in April 1774 he entered the company of *Gendarmes anglais*, in the *Gendarmerie de France*, a cavalry corps, wearing red coats and breeches, and ranking next the *Maison du Roi*. This fine company had been formed by Louis XIV from the Roman Catholic officers and men of the English King Charles II's army, which the Parliament had forced him to dismiss. Louis had appointed himself as their Captain. It was something to belong to so splendid a body, quartered at Versailles and recruited from the 'bourgeois vivant noblement et possédant au moins 400 livres de revenu'. The gendarmes were considered as having the 'prérogatives' of *sous-lieutenants*. Although this *Gendarmerie* was really cavalry, so that the resemblance to the *Gendarmerie* of the Empire is only in name, it is curious to find Moncey, the future commander of Napoleon's *gendarmes*, already seeming to figure with such a force. He must have been a fine man to gain entrance into it, but, alas, more was wanted, and on the 15th August 1776 he was dismissed with the following note, 'A quitté le service par inconduite et légèreté; jolie tournure, mais peu regrettable, à ne pas



reprendre'. After all, one does not expect much steadiness from a soldier of twenty-two!

To have been in three regiments, and to have been turned out of the last, a crack one, would not assist a man in re-entering the army, and this perhaps explains why Jeannot on the 16th August 1779 entered as *sous-lieutenant* a rather peculiar body, the regiment of Nassau-Siegen, intended for naval service, and just reorganized into two companies of infantry and one of artillery, quartered at Saint-Malo. In 1784 it became the regiment of Montréal, and Jeannot, promoted Lieutenant in 1782 in Nassau-Siegen, became First Lieutenant in 'Montréal' in 1785. Early in 1789 Jeannot bought the estate of Moncey, rounding off the family property and giving him the right to take the name of 'de Moncey', although, when the Revolution came, the 'de' was discreetly dropped. In 1791 Moncey became Captain, and in that rank the Revolution found him. He came naturally to 'Pyrénées Occidentales', for on the 17th March 1788 his regiment became the 5th battalion of Light Infantry, or the Chasseurs Cantabres, which was recruited only in the country between the Pyrenees, the Garonne, and the ocean. The battalion was formed under the new organization at Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, where Moncey was in garrison in 1792. It is said that he, like Pérignon, had some thoughts of emigrating. His belonging in any way to the *noblesse* was so recent that this story is probably unfounded: certainly on the 17th November 1792 we find the Mayor and the municipal officers of the town giving him a certificate of 'civisme le plus signalé'. His regiment was naturally taken as part of the nucleus of the army.

Another officer, perhaps more widely known than even Moncey, was the 'premier grenadier de la République', who, like Moncey, was an officer of the *ancien régime*. Théophile-Malo Corret, born in 1743, had entered as a private the '*Mousquetaires Noirs*', the *élite* of the *Maison du Roi*. Thence he soon passed as a *sous-lieutenant* into the infantry regiment of Angoumois, which in 1781 became the 80th regiment of infantry. In 1792 he had twenty-five years' service as an officer, and had been Captain since 1784. He had served in the campaign of Port-Mahon in 1781-2. As his great-grandfather had been the natural son of a Duc de Bouillon, he had applied to the Duke of his day for permission to take the arms and title of his house, La Tour

d'Auvergne: the Duke granted this request, and became the patron of the officer who, receiving a formal diploma on the 20th May 1780, after that date signed himself as La Tour d'Auvergne-Corret, although the 'Corret' is generally omitted in designating him. He does not seem to have had any special sympathy for the Republic, but, when the majority of the officers of his regiment emigrated early in 1792, he refused to join them on the ground that the King himself had ordered them to swear to the pact of 1791. Perhaps from a wish not to seem to be influenced by the promotion that came to officers who remained, perhaps from the disinclination felt by so many officers at this time for the dangers and difficulties of high rank, he after this steadily refused any advancement beyond that of Captain of the grenadiers of his battalion, which appointment he obtained on the 5th February 1792. In May 1792 his regiment sent its first battalion to the Armée du Midi with its two grenadier companies under La Tour. With these and the two fusilier companies which were joined to it he acted as advanced guard in d'Anselme's invasion of Savoy, and about March 1793 he came to Bayonne with his companies for the war with Spain.

The Armée des Pyrénées Orientales had in May 1793 only 10,800 active troops, of whom 2,000 were regulars, and there were 10,289 men in garrisons. But then, and for long afterwards, some of these 'troops' were armed with pikes only, and it was not until well into 1794 that the ardent desire of the men to have muskets could be granted. Much that has been said about the formation of the sister force applies to 'Pyrénées Orientales' also. It started life without a backbone, or sufficient leaven of regulars, so that for long it was a mere half-armed mob. Then the constant change of commanders and of Chiefs of the Staff told against any firm organization. What with nominal commanders present but not acting, and acting commanders not officially nominated, all subject to the wildest interference from the Representatives, it is often difficult to say who was responsible for any movement, especially because the shouts of the inhabitants of Perpignan might at any time suffice to launch a force on the enemy. The history of the army can be separated into two strangely different periods. At first, and until January 1794, we find troops not only indisciplined, but condemning all authority as fit only for slaves. Yet the existence among them

of some good elements, a few regular regiments and some good volunteer battalions, together with the natural aptitude of the French for arms, enabled the army to deliver now and again some telling blows. A column, steel-tipped, as it were, would strike hard, although the men in rear might be armed only with pikes and thoroughly untrustworthy, giving at best what Dugommier called the 'force of inertia'. In defence the troops were usually bad, and at all times, like all raw levies, they were liable to strange panics.

Dugommier came from Toulon in January 1794, and with him came victory. In some way hard to understand the amalgamation of the troops he brought with those already round Perpignan at once produced a good army, capable of sweeping over the strongest works, of besieging fortresses, and of advancing into Spain. Victor came with him, and as General of Brigade showed the same capability that Pérignon and Augereau were displaying with their divisions. Each army had its own qualities, and here we have several instances of jealousy between rival officers, leading to inaction on the field. The rivalry of Pérignon and Augereau alone prevented the former finishing the war at the head of the army, and at the end let the incapable Schérer in to command both. In this period we are dealing with a real army in which the bad elements either disappear or are kept out of sight; and now the worst enemy of the French was not the Spaniards but the fevers which lay ready in Spain. No other army presents such a remarkable change in the course of its career, for if 'Italie' hung long under the mountains till thrown across them by Bonaparte, yet it had always been a fine fighting force, and then the transformation was in the leader, not in the troops.

Of the five future Marshals that served with this army, three—Pérignon, Bessières, and Lannes—had already joined the Armée du Midi before that force was broken up. Pérignon's early career had been quite unique amongst the Marshals. Dominique-Catherine de Pérignon was born on 31st May 1754 at Grenade, near Toulouse, in the part of the province of Languedoc which was to be the department of Haute-Garonne, near which he lived, whenever possible, throughout his life. His family was not rich, but was honourably known; it had given a *capitou* or chief magistrate to Toulouse, and two officers to the



army, and it had some pretensions to belong to the nobility. His father was sent to San Domingo as *Prévôt*, and died there in 1775. Pérignon, now head of the family, entered in 1775 with the rank of *sous-lieutenant* the *Grenadiers royaux de la Guyenne*, a body formed of companies taken from the provincial regiments. This body was abolished on the 15th December 1775, but I think he entered the corps with the same name, formed 30th January 1778 from grenadier companies of certain provincial regiments, and in this he became Captain Adjutant-Major in 1782. Retired on the peace of 1783, he became A.D.C. to the Comte de Preissac, an appointment that was a mere sinecure. On the 18th August 1784 he entered the garrison battalion of Lyons, reverting again to *sous-lieutenant*. Next he seems to have held a commission in the *Grenadiers royaux de Quercy*, a body similar to that of Guyenne. Finding no promotion open to him, he retired in 1785, and, after living with his mother at Briquemont, married on the 14th February 1786 Hélène-Catherine de Grenier, and settled down with his father-in-law at Montech. I make the best I can of the dates of his military service, which we may take as with embodied militia, in which he seems to have done much staff work. He now displayed great liking for two things, law and agriculture, and became very popular with his neighbours, who pardoned his 'malice gasconne' for his good humour. His Canton asked him to accept the new post of *Juge de Paix*, which at the time was considered to be very important, and he fulfilled its duties to their satisfaction. In 1791 he was elected to the Assemblée Législative, which was to continue the work of the Assemblée Constituante. His military knowledge was useful, and in October he was placed on the *Comité militaire* of the Assembly, together with two future Ministers of Napoleon, Carnot and Lacuée. He worked with the moderate and constitutional party, which might have given to France freedom and happiness, had it not been crushed by the Jacobins. Alarmed by the attack on the Tuileries in August 1792, the overthrow of the Monarchy, and the September massacres in the prisons, he left Paris and went south, intending, it is said, to emigrate into Spain, where many of his friends had gone, including the Comte de Preissac, his former commander. He was persuaded by his family to abandon his intention and returned almost immediately to Paris and, as the army offered

a refuge to such men, he offered his services to the War Minister, Schérer, who on the 16th September 1792 appointed him Lieut.-Colonel of a new body, the *Légion des Pyrénées*, sometimes called the *Légion de Gers*, which was just forming in the South at Auch, and in whose organization he was most useful. Thus, when hostilities began, Pérignon had had considerable experience as an officer, a civil magistrate, and a legislator.

Jean-Baptiste Bessières was born on the 6th August 1768 at Prayssac, near Cahors, in that part of Guienne which was to be the department of Lot, whence Murat also came. His father was a surgeon of Prayssac, well-enough off, and of a good 'famille bourgeoise', who sent his son to the college of Cahors in order that he might follow him in his profession. Intelligent and well taught, Bessières would have obeyed his father's wish, but when the Revolution began he turned his thoughts to the army. He entered the National Guard, and was appointed Captain of the grenadiers of Prayssac. Then came the dissolution of the King's Guard, the *Maison du Roi*, and the formation of a *Garde Constitutionnelle* to take the place of the military 'Maison'. This body was to have been 1,800 men, one-third taken from the Line, that is, from the old army, and the other two-thirds from young men from the National Guard. The department of Lot had to choose three men, and having, as General Thoumas says, a lucky hand, chose both Bessières and Murat, thus giving the Empire two Marshals out of its three Guardsmen. Accordingly, on the 7th April 1792, Bessières became a *Garde à cheval du roi*. This Guard, well managed, would have been invaluable; for instance, it would have furnished a centre for the many well-disposed battalions of the National Guard to rally round, and probably, even by itself, would have sufficed to repulse the assault on the Tuileries on the 10th August 1792, for the Marseilles patriots were not formidable to armed men. The patriots, however, were anxious to get Royalty unarmed, and raised an outcry against this Guard, asserting that it had been increased illegally to nearly 6,000 men, and that there was a regular system by which patriots from the National Guard were driven from it. The difference between the fortunes of Murat and Bessières shows that there may have been some foundation for this last charge. Murat, then a red-hot patriot, had, as we have seen, left the Guard on

the 4th March 1792 discontented, if not dismissed, whilst Bessières, then, it is said, a Royalist, remained to the end. This came quickly. The Assembly decreed the dissolution of the Guard, and the King, though he wished to oppose his veto, was over-persuaded by Dumouriez, then Minister, and gave way. On the 5th June 1792 Bessières was discharged, with the rest of the Guard. Dumouriez urged the King to reorganize this body at once on a basis less displeasing to the patriots. Louis refused: he may have thought it hopeless to do this, or, as Thiers suggests, he may have counted on the former members of the Guard, whom secretly he still paid, but he thus left himself with no protection but that of the Swiss Guard and of the well-disposed part of the National Guard, wanting in leaders as these were. The worst part of the Revolution would never have taken place had the King but kept himself under military protection from the mob of Paris. Royalty really had plenty of supporters in the Capital and in the Kingdom.

Bessières, according to the pleasant family tradition, considered himself still bound to the Monarchy, and on the day of the 10th August tried to support it, and risked his life by saving several persons of the *Maison de la Reine* after the palace was taken. Then, forced to hide himself, he at last went south again and engaged as private in the cavalry of the *Légion des Pyrénées* on the 1st November 1792: Pérignon was, as we have seen, already Lieut.-Colonel of that body. Unfortunately here Bessières gave a different description of his conduct. At Paris, he said, he had been assiduous in his attendance at the Jacobins: never had he been so happy as when he sat in the bosom of the Club. On leaving the Constitutional Guard he had enrolled himself in the battalion of the National Guard of the Section of the *Fontaine de Grenelle*, and in it had marched against the Tuileries on the 10th August. Joining the *Légion des Pyrénées*, he had distinguished himself by his motions at the *Société populaire* of Auch, and had thus incurred the dislike of Ramel, his Lieut.-Colonel, who, however, was to perish on the scaffold. Sent to Toulouse to hasten the completion of the uniforms of the Legion, he had, on the order of the Representative, Chaudron-Rousseau, arrested the Girondin d'Ardignac, notwithstanding the 'insolence and the superiority of an unbridled and aristocratic party'. D'Ardignac was indeed arrested on the



29th June by two commissioners, one civil and the other military, a step to which opposition had been feared. The family tradition, as I have said, makes Bessières faithful to the Monarchy, and his sojourn in the Capital after the dissolution of the Guard, his joining the army in the South only after a delay likely to have been caused by his having to conceal himself, supports this; but it is not impossible to account for the story told by Bessières in the South. In 1792 there had been every hope, every possibility, of successful resistance to the extreme party. In 1793 Bessières, belonging to an army where the most infuriated patriots ruled, was pleading for his life, and we need not look too closely into his statements. From what we know of him, it is difficult to imagine him enjoying himself amongst the Jacobins, but many people had to affect a Republican fervour they did not feel. As for marching on the Tuileries on the 10th August 1792, many battalions of the National Guard did that with no intention of acting against the King. As for arresting d'Ardignac, the charge of Federalism made against such men was telling at the time and Bessières could not have resisted the order of the all powerful Representative, Chaudron-Rousseau, the special commissioner of the party which had just triumphed in the Convention. Anyhow, Bessières in the *Légion des Pyrénées* became *adjudant-sous-officier* on the 1st December 1793. It is interesting to think of the different fates of the two Marshals from the Department Lot. Murat, Jacobin in 1792, King in 1814, turned against the man who had raised him so high, with fatal effect to his benefactor and to himself. Bessières, Marshal and Duke, was as faithful to the Emperor, whose Guard he practically commanded, as I believe he had been to the King. I shall refer later to the way in which his death and that of Duroc left Napoleon without his surest companions.

The third of these future Marshals came from Gascony. Jean Lannes was born on the 11th April 1769, at Lectoure, in the part of Gascony which was to be the department of Gers. His father was the owner of a small farm and of a little house in Lectoure. An elder brother of the Marshal's, who had become a priest, gave Jean what education he received, but that did not amount to much, or last long, for, although he was to study in the college of Lectoure, the bankruptcy of a friend for whom his father had

gone surety made it necessary to withdraw Jean from the college, and to apprentice him to a dyer. Then comes a doubtful time. It is said that he entered the army, became Sergeant-Major, was wounded in a duel, and returned home; that he had decided to leave the army but abandoned this decision at the advice of his friends, one of whom, a draper, warned him that he would get no money in trade, but in the army might become Captain! The worthy tradesman prided himself on this advice when 'Louiset' returned as a General of Division. If this account is true, Lannes may have had several years' service in the regulars and should be classed among the Marshals that had been soldiers before the wars of the Revolution, but we do not get on firm ground until he appears in the 2nd battalion of the volunteers of his department, Gers (raised on the 20th June 1792) and is at once elected *sous-lieutenant*, a fact pointing to his having seen former service. His battalion went to the Camp de Miral, near Toulouse, where we shall find him.

To the men that served with this army and afterwards became famous, we should add Bonaparte himself, if we were to follow M. le Général Susane, to whose works I am so much indebted. But Susane has made, I venture to think, a slip in saying that Bonaparte, arriving as Lieutenant at Valence in June 1791, soon afterwards left with his company of the 4th or Grenoble Regiment of artillery for Perpignan, where he received his commission as Captain, dated the 6th February 1792. In reality he was in Corsica from the 6th September 1791 to the 2nd May 1792, when, on landing at Marseilles, he went through Valence to Paris. There he arrived on the 21st May. He returned to Corsica in September 1792. His company, according to M. Jung, had been sent to Perpignan on the 18th March 1792, but he never joined it. Had he been with his company, he would have belonged to the Armée du Midi, and then to the Armée des Pyrénées Orientales.

The Spanish Court wished to remain on the defensive on the West and to limit the operations in that quarter to a demonstration, while on the East their forces should invade France. In front of the 'Pyrénées Occidentales' lay a Spanish army under Caro, consisting of eight thousand regulars and from nine to ten thousand militia: this force covered Navarra and Guipuzcoa. As a reserve, the Prince de Castel-Franco had from four to five

thousand men guarding Aragon. In the eastern Pyrenees the Spaniards had collected round Figueras an army of some fifty thousand men, good troops of the type of that period.<sup>1</sup> At their head was Ricardos,<sup>2</sup> a General well-suited to carry out the wish of the Court to reoccupy what they considered as one of their former provinces. He himself was of mild character, well disposed towards the new doctrines and regretting the war: it was, he considered, a mere lovers' quarrel that would cease when France became reasonable. He was prepared only to move slowly, and his plan was to place his divisions in formidable positions, threatening the French, but also dispersing his men. Still, when pressed by circumstances, he was capable of rising to the occasion and of rectifying his original errors quickly. His task at first was easy: indeed, all through this war the Spaniards were superior in cavalry and also generally in artillery, and now they could have penetrated as far as they liked.

The war began with Spanish successes on both fronts. On the west Caro, a man of some vigour, struck at the French right, which lay along the right bank of the Bidassoa, at Hendaye, with its left towards Vera. On coming under fire the young Republican volunteers fell into a panic, and by the 30th April the French had been driven from the Bidassoa, and even from the Camp de Jolimont, far in rear. Duverger, who had remained in command, was arrested and sent to Paris, but I think he saved his head. On the 2nd May Servan himself reached Bayonne from Toulouse. He decided to wait for reinforcements, and meanwhile drew back his right to Bidart, abandoning all the country on the left bank of the Nivelle. Very sensibly he avoided all encounters with the enemy and set to work to organize and drill his young levies under the protection of a screen of regular units and of his best volunteer battalions. La Tour d'Auvergne was given command of all the grenadier companies of the army and with them he reoccupied Saint-Pée. In May most of the troops of the Bidart camp were again to some extent pushed forward.

<sup>1</sup> For the Spanish army see Fervel, i. 21-5.

<sup>2</sup> General Don Antonio Ramón Ricardos (1727-94); *Biog. des Cont.*, iv. 1097-8; Fervel, i. 29, 40-1; *Godoy*, i. 246. The article in *Michaud*, xxxvii seems wrong.



Satisfied with the ground he had won from the French right, Caro now struck at their left, by moving from Roncesvalles by the main road on Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port. Here a French force blocked the road at Château Pignon, and in front of it was a post commanded by Captain Moncey, brought from the right with his Chasseurs Cantabres, and other local Chasseurs, twelve companies in all. The troops at Château-Pignon were undisciplined and in disorder, so that Moncey, never an easy man to get on with, despising the commander at the fort, kept his Chasseurs separate from the main body, as if he feared some contagion. On the 6th June he was attacked, but at first routed his assailants and captured their guns. Then, however, as far superior forces came up, he had to retreat on Château-Pignon in order to make a stand. The sight of his men retiring on them was too much for the raw battalions there and, when a few shells fell amongst them, they took to flight. The commander of the wing, La Genetière, came up from the rear, and with Moncey tried to stop the fugitives, but they fled on, abandoning him to the enemy. One of the officers supporting Moncey was Captain Boudet who was at Wagram to command the division which covered the bridge, and which was being gradually crushed by the Austrians, when Napoleon, seeing how far Davout had advanced, announced victory. Another French column also fled from the Baztan valley on Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port. Servan sent Dubouquet there who rallied the men and then set to work to discipline them till they became of use. Moncey, for his share in the affair of Château-Pignon, was made Lieut.-Colonel on the 26th June. The enemy did not follow up their success by attacking Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, and on the 22nd June Servan, grown stronger, threw the extreme left of the Spaniards over the Bidassoa, a small success, but important as raising the spirits of the army. This was one of the affairs in which Captain La Tour d'Auvergne distinguished himself at the head of his grenadiers: axe in hand, he attacked the gate of one post and then led the assault on the works of the Montagne Louis XIV, getting seven balls through his clothes. Even the Representative Ysabeau was pleased and reported to the Convention that every one had done his duty; but success seldom saved a commander who was 'suspect' in any way, and Servan had had relations with Roland, one of the Girondins, who had just fallen.

On the 4th July he was dismissed and was succeeded temporarily by Labourdonnaie from the Armée des Côtes de la Manche (or La Vendée). The old and invalid d'Elbhecq,<sup>1</sup> who had commanded at Metz, took permanent charge in six days' time and Labourdonnaie, going to the right wing, died at Dax on the 7th October. D'Elbhecq did little, and died at Saint-Jean-de-Luz on the 31st August. He was replaced by Desprez-Crassier who from the 26th December 1792 to the 14th March 1793 had commanded the Armée du Rhin. He had only a month in his new command, for his rough and haughty manners displeased the Representatives and the army, so that, when an attempt at a great attack on Biriattou on the 30th August, intended to drive the enemy from the Bidassoa, failed, he was denounced: on the 4th October his appointment was cancelled, and four days later he was arrested, but eventually saved his head.

With the appointment of the successor to Desprez-Crassier, Muller, begins the real career of the Pyrénées Occidentales as an army, just as that of its sister force dates from the command of Dugommier. Muller himself was no brilliant leader, but he had been well trained under the *ancien régime*. French by birth, he, like his father, had served much in Swiss regiments in the pay of France; he joined one as a volunteer in 1765 and gained his commission in it. In 1791 he won his captaincy and the coveted cross of Saint-Louis.<sup>2</sup> Then, forming a battalion from men of the disbanded Swiss regiments, he served in Dumouriez's campaigns in the North and at Jemappes, next passing to the War Office in the artillery and engineer department. On the 5th July 1793 he was promoted General of Brigade and was appointed Chief of the Staff to this army. In that capacity he succeeded in winning the favour of the Representatives, and now on the 2nd October<sup>3</sup> he was nominated by them to be temporary Commander-in-Chief. Rank at this time was given and held rather capriciously, and Muller, still General of Brigade, commanded some ten Generals of Division, and was not given divisional rank and confirmed as Commander-in-Chief until the

<sup>1</sup> D'Elbhecq or d'Ébecq; Simond, 151; Jomini, *Rev.*, iii. 336.

<sup>2</sup> The bearer had to have twenty years service, and to be a Roman Catholic.

<sup>3</sup> This date does not agree with that already given for the cancelling of his predecessor's appointment.

14th April 1794.<sup>1</sup> Some of the Generals under him must have been a miscellaneous lot: Lavictoire, for example, who on the 2nd June 1793 had led 2,300 men as a General of Brigade, first explaining to them that they could have no doubts about his fidelity to the Republic, because it was only a year since he had been making their clothes. The honest General indeed was a tailor by trade, but he died like a man at the head of his column.

Muller himself was in several ways an instance of how capricious was the tenure of rank. He had been nominated to the command by the Representatives, but the Minister had on the 8th September appointed no less a person than General Alexandre Davy Dumas for the permanent command. At the same time he promoted several Generals of Brigade to divisional rank. The Representatives were furious and acted as if they were the sole rulers of the army to which they were delegated. They actually made a formal order that, because the Minister, when making these promotions, could not have known the important operations they had carried out in the army, their nominations should hold good. Muller was forbidden to deliver letters of service to any officer promoted, or who should be promoted, to any grade whatever by the *Conseil exécutif*, and General Dumas and all the officers promoted by that *Conseil* were ordered not to leave the walls of Bayonne and of Saint-Esprit until those gods on earth, the Representatives, should arrive at Bayonne and confer on the part to be taken in this matter. These fiery Pro-Consuls had obviously to put forward the merits of Muller, 'who by reason of his talent and his patriotism possessed all our confidence', and they argued that Dumas did not know the locality or the positions; but it was the idea that anything could be done without their co-operation that infuriated them. Poor Dumas was styled a 'petit officier et grand intrigant': still, he was permitted to remain as a General of Division. The strangest thing about this extraordinary rebellion of the Representatives is that it was perfectly successful.

The great need of the army at the moment when Muller took command was a proper organization, and this he proceeded to give it. In July 1793 the strength had been some 28,000 in-

<sup>1</sup> Général Jacques-Léonard Muller (1749-1840), Baron de Gaterat under the Empire. *Fastes*, iii. 448-50; *Michaud*, lxxv. 5-6. Jomini, *Rev.*, iii. 279 is wrong in saying he served in La Vendée.



fantry and 1,500 artillery, but with only 700 cavalry, an arm not much wanted in this district. Then in January 1794 a strong detachment was sent to La Vendée under General Alexandre Dumas, and another to the Armée des Pyrénées Orientales, then under Dugommier, who was preparing to advance. Altogether these two drafts weakened the army by some 8,000 men, but fresh, though raw, troops joined from the new levies. Muller pushed on the *embrigadement* or *amalgame* and the army now had forty battalions. Twenty-six of these, the pick of the army, formed three active divisions under Moncey, Frégéville, and Delaborde: the two divisions on the left, under Mauco and Marbot, consisted of fourteen battalions and were formed of new levies, badly instructed and badly equipped. The army was getting into shape, and the supply departments were becoming properly organized. The Spanish army in front of it had also sent detachments to the east, and was only 20,000 strong; half of its troops were militia.

I pass over various desultory attacks on either side, which did not affect the campaign or any persons in whom we are interested. On the 23rd July 1793, during d'Elbhecq's command, Caro advanced in person from the lower Bidassoa on Urrugne, on the road to Saint-Jean-de-Luz, with 4,000 infantry and 500 horse. Moncey, who had been shifted to this right wing, with his chasseurs and some grenadiers, checked their attempt to surround a detachment, and the enemy, when charged by a few French cavalry, fled in disorder, Caro himself being nearly taken prisoner. Lieut.-Colonel Moncey's behaviour on this day was, as we shall see, noticed. On the 11th November Muller, anxious to get a good position for the winter, brought forward his right to the heights overlooking the lower Bidassoa, where he formed the strong *Camp des Sans-Culottes*, which was protected by works, and in which the men, instead of tents, were given huts. La Tour d'Auvergne with some grenadier companies had covered the erection of the camp, and then took post on the extreme right by the sea, where, furnished with a book, his pipe, and his sword, he visited his outposts. The centre was back on the Nivelle at Saint-Pée and Ainhou, while the left held Saint-Jean-de-Luz. On the 5th February 1794 came a more serious affair, for some 13,000 Spaniards attacked the right by Hendaye, but after a combat of seven hours they were driven back.

Lieut.-Colonel Moncey had been ill for a fortnight and intended to go back to Bayonne next day. This morning he was in bed, having taken an emetic, when he heard the noise of the attack. Hastening to his men, weak as he was, he remained on the field until he had seen the withdrawal of the enemy. For this the Representatives, making him skip a rank, on the 18th February 1794 promoted him General of Brigade, basing this not only on his conduct at Château-Pignon on the 6th June 1793 and by Saint-Jean-de-Luz on the 23rd July, and this last affair, but also on the attachment of his comrades for him. This special promotion, like his later rise to command, produced some ill-feeling, for two parties were struggling in the army, and a denunciation to the *Comité* caused his momentary suspension. Then, with the usual see-saw policy of the time, on the 23rd February 1794 he was confirmed in his new rank by the Representatives. He himself modestly acknowledged how heavy he felt the burden, and often enough at this period men, whether from modesty or from fear of envy, refused promotion. La Tour d'Auvergne often did so, for instance on the 31st July 1793 Joseph Dumas, the former commander of his regiment, had urged him to accept the Lieut.-Colonelcy of the regiment for which, as election was still the road to promotion, he had received 500 votes against 170 given to the next candidate. Although assured that he ought to prevent this man's being appointed, he still would not accept the higher rank.

## IX

### PERPIGNAN

(April 1793 to February 1794)

Confused campaign in the eastern Pyrenees. Spanish victory at Trouillas. Struggle between Dagobert and the Representatives. Rise and fall of d'Aoust.

For Contemporary Events see under Chapter VIII.

DURING this earlier part of the year 1793 the campaign on the eastern Pyrenees had followed a similar course. Servan, the commander of the Armée des Pyrénées, before its division, had gone to visit Bayonne, leaving the old La Houlière in charge at Perpignan, when Ricardos advanced on the 17th April 1793, and on the 20th routed the French at Céret on the Tech river. The Representatives promptly suspended La Houlière, who in despair blew out his brains. The slowness of Ricardos permitted the French to collect some 12,000 to 13,000 men round Perpignan, but only 9,000 of these were armed, and the best troops had been placed in the fortresses. It was under these gloomy circumstances that, as I have said, this division became officially the Armée des Pyrénées Orientales.

After the interim commands of Champron and Grandpré, General de Flers<sup>1</sup> arrived at Perpignan on the 14th May 1793 as the permanent commander of the Armée des Pyrénées Orientales. He was one of Dumouriez' men and a cavalry Colonel. In March 1793 he had taken reinforcements to Dumouriez in Holland, and, when soon afterwards Dumouriez left that country for Neerwinden, de Flers had been left in command as a General of Division. After the disaster of Neerwinden, acting under Dumouriez' orders, he capitulated with the garrison of Breda on the 2nd April, marching out for France with the honours of war. He would apparently have been equal to his task with this new army had he been firm in his seat, but he was in something of the position of Biron in La Vendée, for his connexion with Dumouriez, who had now

<sup>1</sup> Général Charles de Flers (1756-94), *Michaud*, lxiv. 210-11; Fervel, i. 43-4.



gone over to the enemy, made him 'suspect', and like Biron he was too calm, too sensible for the noisy patriots and the boiling Representatives who were ruling this army. The day before his arrival General Dagobert, a man of some note, of whom I shall speak later, had joined from the Armée d'Italie. The first attempt of the new commander to check the advancing enemy was unfortunate. He placed Dagobert with some 5,000 men at Mas Deu, to hold a position between two torrents, but on the 20th May Ricardos attacked with 15,000 men, and Dagobert, fighting stubbornly, as was his wont, was thrown back. Although the Spaniards, in their half-hearted way at this period, retired on their camp at Boulou, the day ended by a wild panic in which the flying troops of Dagobert met and carried away with them to Perpignan the reinforcements de Flers was bringing up, while the garrison lost their heads and showered case on the mob below their walls, taking them for the enemy. Happily Ricardos knew nothing of this till too late, and then, instead of falling on the terrified mass under Perpignan, he spent his time in a methodical attack on Bellegarde and the forts on the road from Spain. De Flers took advantage of the six weeks interval thus gained to form a great *Camp de l'Union* under protection of the fortifications of Perpignan: here he drilled some 12,000 men into shape. Still, the position was very bad, for all the South was in a flame of indignation at the successful attack made by the Commune of Paris on the Convention on the 31st May, and there was small hope of reinforcements or supplies.

When Ricardos did consider his rear sufficiently secure to justify an advance he took the strange plan of making a regular frontal attack on the camp, trusting to his artillery of 100 guns to throw the garrison into confusion, before he should attack in columns. Nothing could have suited de Flers better, for his mob would have had no chance in the field, or against any turning movement, and he had most firmly opposed a proposal to abandon the place and to retire. On the 17th July Ricardos made his attack and was repulsed. It was Valmy over again, for de Flers wisely insisted on remaining inside his works, and though the French had hardly any gunners, and though their pieces were mainly served by former coastguards, their fire, controlled by Lamartillière, overcame that of the Spaniards,

who drew off. Lieut.-Colonel Pérignon had had an opportunity of distinguishing himself. Dagobert, commanding the *avant-garde*, had gone to see de Flers, leaving Pérignon in charge for the moment. Some of his legion were suffering from the fire of the Spanish skirmishers, and Pérignon sent them reinforcements, but they still gave way. Taking the musket of a wounded man and throwing himself into the ranks of a regular regiment which stood firm, he rallied his men. Such acts were not uncommon at this period and were considered especially praiseworthy. Dagobert returned and, as usual with him, took the offensive against the retiring enemy, who threw their cavalry on him and, had not these been checked by a canal, it would have gone hard with him. So the day closed, with the young troops made confident by the sight of the retreating columns of the enemy. As for Pérignon, he was promoted Colonel on the 20th July.

Ricardos now formed a great fortified camp at Ponteilla to the south-west of Perpignan, so that the two armies were entrenched one against the other. In the French *Camp de l'Union* all was confusion. De Flers, as was but natural, had not been prominent in the late engagement, in which others, such as Dagobert, had made more show. The surrender of Bellegarde, and the capture of Villefranche, on the Tet above Perpignan, shook his position. The troops required time to consolidate their new front, but this the noisy mob would not see. In vain did de Flers, assembling his Generals, obtain an acknowledgement from them that nothing could be done but to remain on the defensive. The Representatives turned on him, and even three of his Generals communicated to the Representatives their distrust of their commander. On the 7th August the Representatives suspended him for the extraordinary crime of 'having lost the confidence of the citizen-soldiers composing the army', that is, of the men who, intoxicated by the smallest triumph, ran shrieking at any reverse. He was sent to Paris and in due time was guillotined.

The Representatives had secured a successor, one of the Generals of Division, Puget,<sup>1</sup> the *ci-devant* Marquis de Barbantane. This was one of the bubbles which floated on the wave

<sup>1</sup> Général Paul-François-Hilarion-Bienvenu, Marquis de Barbantane (1754-1828), *Michaud*, lxxviii. 117-23; Fervel, i. 100-1.

of the Revolution. One of the Nobles who adopted the new doctrines, he had been a Colonel of infantry, and as a *Maréchal-de-camp* by seniority in 1791, he had commanded the 8th Military Division; but, though he was in retirement when Biron came to command the Armée d'Italie, he was again employed and, at his own request, was sent to 'Pyrénées Orientales'. Before the suspension of de Flers he had assured the Representatives of his willingness to undertake the command, professing his unworthiness but flatteringly saying that 'amongst the blind the one-eyed is King'. One thing to be expected from such a man, taking command with the example of his predecessor, was vigour, for in all his previous actions he had professed himself anxious, as he put it, 'to wash out his original sin' of being a Noble. On the same date as that of this new appointment the Representatives sent Dagobert with 3,000 men into the Cerdagne, where he was successful. But round Perpignan affairs went very differently. Slowly, and with many misgivings, Ricardos came across the Tet, and by a strange strategy at last, as it were, surrounded that town and the *Camp de l'Union* by four great camps, Argelès on the south-east, near the sea, then the great camp of Ponteilla to the south-west, Olette on the Tet above Perpignan, and lastly Peyrestortes, on the left bank of the Tet and to the north-west of the town. Little was now required to cut off Perpignan from France entirely, but that little the cautious Ricardos did not attempt. Still, this slow embrace of the army had struck terror into the heart of the ardent Revolutionist, Puget de Barbantane. De Flers had not been vigorous enough for him; now all he saw in the extraordinary dispersion of the enemy, which invited a stroke from the centre, was the danger of being crushed. He insisted on withdrawing the head-quarters of the army, with a division, from Perpignan, as if to save so much. To the clamours of the Representatives he answered that he was Commander-in-Chief of the Armée des Pyrénées Orientales and not of Perpignan, and that it was his duty not to compromise the troops of the Republic. Leaving a young General, d'Aoust, in command of Perpignan, he withdrew northwards, placing the division he had brought away at Salses and himself going on to Narbonne to look for reinforcements. Thus on the main road from Narbonne to Perpignan the troops of the two nations were



sandwiched: a French division of apparently some 4,000 at Salses, then 12,000 Spaniards at Peyrestortes, with the French in Perpignan surrounded by the three camps of Olette, Ponteilla, and Argelès. The situation was the more peculiar as the French left still held Collioure and the coast forts south-east and in rear of Ponteilla. This was too much for Puget de Barbantane, who now realized how easy it was to criticize and how hard to command. 'The situation is beyond my powers,' he told the Minister in a letter resigning his position; and he was at once dismissed. One would have expected him to follow de Flers to the scaffold, an event to be awaited with equanimity, but he still floated in the angry sea where so many better men had sunk. Imprisoned for a short time at Toulouse and then set free, he was again clapped into jail by Robespierre, and remained there for a time. Napoleon summed him up well when he directed that he should be left at his home, because he was useless at Paris. The strangest thing about his career is its ending: he died in his bed.

To succeed him in command of the army General Turreau from La Vendée was appointed by Paris, but the Representatives on the spot had already sent for Dagobert from the Cerdagne. Pending his arrival they entrusted the command to General d'Aoust and, to make the situation perfect, placed Doctor Goguet, who in a few months had become General of Division, at the head of the important division at Salses. D'Aoust was one of the many officers whom the Republic first raised to high rank and then soon sent to the scaffold. Young and brave, he had been A.D.C. in the Armée du Nord, first to Rochambeau and then to Biron. He had accompanied Biron to the Armée d'Italie, where he had become General of Brigade. He had joined 'Pyrénées Orientales' as General of Division and had been Chief of the Staff to de Flers, who liked him. The son of a regicide, he had the confidence of the Representatives and had called attention to himself, when left in command of Perpignan by the retreating Barbantane, by assuring the Minister that the ramparts should never be sullied by the infamous flag of the Spanish tyrant: if the place were not tenable, he had sworn never to capitulate, but would blow up the fortifications and cut his way out. 'All good patriots will follow me, for the free man cannot live on an enslaved soil.'

This was to use the true language of patriots, and contrasted strongly with the prudence of Barbantane. Not only did the Representatives now place him in temporary command, but so much did they esteem him that (with the exception of the brief period, 18th to 29th September, when Dagobert took charge) he was for all practical purposes in command until Dugommier came in January 1794. Although Fortune gave him some good days, he had many enemies. The 'old' Dagobert sneered at his youth and inexperience, and General Turreau, whom the Representatives got rid of in his favour, described him as incapable. Hardy, the agent of the Minister, wrote that 'Monsieur d'Aoust' acknowledged how scanty was his knowledge. His real faults were his presumption in believing he could command, and his failure to understand that it was impossible to deal any far-reaching stroke with the army as he found it.

The extraordinary entanglement of the posts held by the two armies soon ended, and by chance ended happily for the French. On the 17th September the Spaniards advanced from Peyrestortes, the post threatening d'Aoust's communications with France, and took Vernet, not far from the left bank of the Tet, and so near to Perpignan that their guns sent their projectiles into the town. Such an advance from the north should not have been left isolated, but should have been accompanied by at least a threat from the camps of the enemy to the south. As, however, no such threat was made, d'Aoust came out with 2,000 of his best troops, and retook Vernet. There he would have stopped, for he had one eye, as Kléber would have said, on Perpignan in his rear, and feared the effect on the rabble he had left to hold the town of any attack from Ponteilla. Part of the population of Perpignan, however, had come out to see the fight and, delighted with the victory, they shouted for an attack on Peyrestortes itself. D'Aoust hesitated, for he could not believe in the inaction of Ricardos, and in taking Peyrestortes, he might lose Perpignan. He was, however, commander only as far as he carried out the wishes of the Representatives, and these decided for advance. One of them, Cassanyès, rode on for Salses, to bring up the division of Goguët to assist. It was half-past ten a.m., and at five the two divisions were to attack simultaneously. Reinforcing himself till his strength

was 4,000, d'Aoust formed three columns of attack (the centre of these being led by General of Brigade Pérignon), besides another column of observation. At five p.m. he attacked, but Goguet did not come up, and he was beaten off. Meantime the extraordinary carelessness of the Spaniards in not blocking the road to France had let Cassanyès reach Salses, whence he started with Doctor Goguet and 3,500 men. Delayed by a counter-order given by d'Aoust through some blunder, the Salses column did not reach Peyrestortes until 7 p.m., but then, guided by Cassanyès who knew the ground, they penetrated into the Spanish camp at an unexpected point. Then d'Aoust again advanced, and the two divisions swept the Spaniards from the position, Pérignon being wounded in the struggle. Seven colours, forty-three guns, and 500 prisoners were the trophies of this day, and the fugitive Spaniards, making for the Tet to cross at Saint-Félieu, might have been easily anticipated, but d'Aoust, believing Perpignan to be attacked, sent off reinforcements there and did not follow up his victory. Still, the blow had told, and an easy victory two days later, when Villefranche was retaken, definitely checked the invasion. Bad as the troops might be, Ricardos could no longer sprawl his divisions round them, but, as Turreau said, the result was much due to fortunate circumstances and but little to d'Aoust.

Now began a contest which showed the evil of the Representatives' power over the movements of an army. It was resolved to attack at once the camp at Ponteilla. D'Aoust had thought of this for his first stroke before Peyrestortes, when, if he had not been able to use Goguet, the Spaniards could hardly have used the 12,000 they had at Peyrestortes, except for a return blow at Perpignan. But then came the difficulty. Who was to lead the main or assaulting column? Obviously, said Goguet and Cassanyès, we, for we won the day at Peyrestortes. On the other hand d'Aoust and his Representative, Fabre, claimed that they should have their turn at a victory. D'Aoust won, but on the morning of the 19th September, the day chosen, 'the old Dagobert' arrived, bringing his division from the Cerdagne. All crowded around him bragging of what they had done, whilst he thought of his own victories just won in the Cerdagne, and the old gentleman was utterly disgusted when the riotous mob attempted to carry him in triumph through



the streets. He would not move nor adopt the plan he found prepared. His own men had not come up, and he did not trust the shouting rabble he found eager to advance. Still less did he trust the Generals, d'Aoust whom a year before he had known as a simple A.D.C., and Goguet, who then had been a Doctor. The enemy's camps were too strong for a frontal attack: he would throw himself into the mountains in rear of them, and would blow up the Céret bridge and thus cut their retreat. This seems much the same plan as was carried out later by Dugommier, under less favourable circumstances, after the French left had been driven from Collioure and the coast, but to the Representatives the idea seemed wild, and one of them declaimed against such a sacrilege as destroying the fine bridge at Céret. At last Dagobert and the Representatives agreed on an attack on the Ponteilla camp. He meant to fight in oblique order. Goguet had the right or assaulting column, composed of his own division, the older battalions from the *Camp de l'Union*, and troops from the Armée Centrale, in which Lannes probably served. The little cavalry the army possessed, and which may have included Lieutenant Bessières, marched with this column, which was some 5,000 strong. Goguet was to turn the enemy's left at Trouillas by Llupia and Terrets, when the other divisions would join in. D'Aoust had the left column of 4,000 men, at the head of which was Pérignon, now recovered from his recent wound, while in rear came 3,000 men of the new levy, armed only with pikes. Dagobert himself with his Cerdagne division reinforced to 4,000 was in the centre. The divisions of his force were separated, and the assaulting division was weak, but his great danger came from his treatment of the wing-commanders. He had been showering sarcasms on d'Aoust and Goguet, yet now he was employing them for very important work, and the more inefficient of the two was to strike the decisive blow. Doubtless the Representatives would not allow him to replace their favourites, which would involve their own removal from command and so from all hope of acquiring glory on the field, but he was asking too much from human nature if he expected hearty co-operation from d'Aoust and Goguet.

On the 21st September came the battle of Trouillas, where Dagobert's two lieutenants paid him back for all his sneers. Goguet on the right was turning the Spanish left, but, instead

of pushing on rapidly, he halted and began a cannonade on the fortified post of Thuir, thus calling attention to the very point which he should have left in rear. On the left d'Aoust only crawled along. Appreciating the position, Ricardos placed some troops to watch d'Aoust, and formed the mass of his men in front of Goguet, who then retreated, and, as Dagobert said, hid himself in an olive wood. The impatient, irascible Dagobert saw that his plan had failed, but he believed he could take advantage of most of Ricardos's troops having been drawn to the flanks, and so, placing a regular regiment (Champagne) to lead, he threw himself on the Spanish centre and at first had success. Ricardos, however, was capable of good resolutions, and now, concentrating on his centre, he drove the French back. Then Dagobert attempted a flank march across the enemy's front in order to join the skulking Goguet, but this was fatal, for the Spaniards came down on him, and one of his regular regiments (Vernandois) was about to surrender, when the indignant General showered case shot on it. Finally the late centre, now a mass of fugitives, joined Goguet and got off amongst the hills, while Dagobert declaimed against 'these cowardly doctors, improvised Generals, whose shameful inaction had ruined everything'. Finally the French again assembled under Perpignan, having lost 3,000 men, some of their best troops. Goguet and d'Aoust pleaded that they had no written orders, a point on which Dagobert was generally careless, but to which on this occasion he seems to have attended. Doubtless Cassanyès was right when he said that the two Generals had sacrificed the public cause to their own private revenges.

This Spanish victory had been mainly due to the fact that Dagobert had given Ricardos time to collect his troops after Peyrestortes, but it had a strange result. Dagobert, who was tenacity itself, made the unwilling Goguet demonstrate against the enemy's left and threaten their bridge over the Tech at Céret. Ricardos took alarm and, believing the French were about to be heavily reinforced, he drew back to the camp of Boulou. He even proposed to his Court to draw back across the frontier to Figueras, but he was ordered to hold on, and a division of 6,000 Portuguese under General Forbes was sent to him. Dagobert now intended to throw his army by Banyuls-les-Aspres on the rear of the enemy, but, as he moved on the

29th September, the Representatives stopped him. Furious at this, he resigned command and next day returned to the Cerdagne with his division, railing at the youngster d'Aoust, who did not know his business. To the *Comité* he complained of the interference of the Representatives. 'Is it in the order of things that a man who is not a soldier, who understands nothing about military affairs, should come and paralyse the best combined operations?': a question many Generals had asked, but not of the *Comité*. The Representatives, delighted to have got rid of 'the soldier', once more gave the temporary command to their young favourite, d'Aoust, who let the Spaniards draw safely back to Boulou and then began a series of attacks on different posts of the enemy, none of which had much result: the hardest fighting took place on the 14th October 1793 at the *Batterie du Sang*. Lannes must have taken part in these combats, for on the 21st October he was promoted Captain of grenadiers.<sup>1</sup> On the 11th October the real commander, Turreau, arrived from the Armée des Côtes de la Rochelle, having been detained by a wound since his appointment by the Minister. Whatever his faults in his subsequent career in La Vendée, he acted here as a man of sense, supposing always (and of this there can be little doubt) that it was impossible for him to over-rule the Representatives and to direct the operations of his own army effectually. His appointment did not suit the Representatives at all, and on learning it they had written to the Minister representing that it would be better to keep him in La Vendée, which he knew well, instead of sending him to a new theatre. On his arrival they told him that, as d'Aoust was already engaged in carrying out an operation, it would be best to let him finish it. This suited Turreau, who was horrified at the state in which he found his new command, and at the manner in which the Representatives usurped the powers of the Generals. A man of some initiative, as we have seen in La Vendée, he did not wish to become a mere tool as d'Aoust was, and, taking advantage of the carelessness of the War Office in not sending to the army his formal appointment, he left the charge of the active operations in the hands of d'Aoust, while he himself took the part of a criticizing spectator. Meantime he would study the country and the general state of affairs. Since, however,

<sup>1</sup> Godoy, i. 166-7 note, wrongly makes Turreau present in command.



his name figured as in command, writers such as Godoy treat him as actually directing operations.

His criticisms are valuable. The staffs of the army were too large and were badly composed, because the Representatives were constantly making fresh promotions. D'Aoust he considered incapable, but he had taken a liking to Dagobert, whom he met on his way at Mont-Louis (now, according to the silly Republican mania for fresh names, renamed Mont-Libre), and whom he had brought with him with a great part of his division. If Dagobert were nominated Commander-in-Chief he, Turreau, would gladly resign the post to him. What is strange, considering how soon after this he came to hate Marceau in La Vendée and tried to damage him, is that he now recommended that the young officer should be sent to 'Pyrénées Orientales'. Pérignon he praised, saying that both his talents and his *civisme* could be relied on. Then, Turreau complained, the Representatives meddled in military matters, of which they understood nothing, with the worst results. Of this they had furnished a striking example. They had so far prevented any turning movement on a large scale: now, intoxicated by the Spanish retreat, they proposed to 'reconquer Toulon in Spain' by launching two columns of 4,000 men each into that country, in rear of Ricardos. These columns were so to 'warm', the one Rosas and the other Figueras, that those fortresses would surrender, when the columns would unite and fall on the rear of Ricardos, who apparently could be trusted to remain passive till then in the Boulou camp. Naturally Dagobert treated this plan with contempt, but Turreau went as far as to agree that d'Aoust should strike at Rosas, in order to recall the Spaniards to their own side of the frontier. After that, he told the Minister, he himself would really take command, but would most certainly resign if Fabre insisted on the army's passing the winter in Spain. The modified plan was duly attempted by d'Aoust, but failed at once. In this operation Captain Lannes received a ball through the left arm, the first of the many wounds he was to receive during his career. The situation now demanded, as Turreau himself knew, that the troops should go into winter quarters. He represented to the Minister for War that, at the very time the Representatives were preparing for a move, the army had only 50,000 cartridges and had wasted two millions

since the 10th August. Among the few officers that supported Turreau was Augereau, now, according to Fervel, General of Brigade, although that rank does not figure in his list of services as given by Gavard. Things now came to a crisis. Turreau found that the Representatives were secretly planning to start afresh for Spain: he therefore assembled a council of war at which, out of nineteen Generals, only Dagobert, Poinot, and Turreau opposed the plan for an advance. Dagobert was immediately accused by the Representatives of being a traitor; on the 17th November he was suspended and ordered to retire twenty leagues from the frontier. Off he went boldly to Paris, where he laid before the *Comité* all the faults of the Representatives, their absurd plan, and Fabre's self-praise. Were these plans like the Ark of God, not to be touched under pain of death? This was a new tone for a General to take. But the army's regrets for Dagobert reached the *Comité* and Hardy, the Minister's agent, wrote in his support. In the result Dagobert triumphed just when one would have expected his head to fall like those of Custine and Biron. But there was one difference between his attitude and theirs. They had attacked the Minister and his men, who consequently had used all their influence against them: Dagobert, on the other hand, attacked only the Representatives with the army. Now the *Comité*, I think, had always been a little jealous of the Representatives with the various armies and must have found those with the two armies of the Pyrenees especially headstrong. However this may be, Dagobert returned to his favourite Cerdagne in triumph and the Representatives must have been much relieved when, on the 18th April 1794, he died, after a successful expedition, leaving them free from all fear of one of his stormy returns to Perpignan. A few Generals of Dagobert's independent character, if they could have won success, would have cut the claws of the Representatives and relegated them to their proper functions.

As for the main command, Turreau's requests to be transferred were complied with, and on the 3rd November the *Comité* nominated to replace him Doctor Doppet, who as we have seen had commanded at the siege of Lyons and had then for a moment appeared in the same capacity before Toulon. However, on the 22nd November the Representatives, anxious to get rid of the

remonstrances of Turreau, placed d'Aoust in command until Doppet should arrived, and Turreau, delighted to get free from such a muddle, started on a very devious route for his new command in La Vendée. Before starting he saw the army receive another severe check, and left adjuring the Representatives 'at last to heal the wounds of our unfortunate soldiers, who are sacrificed pitilessly, hopelessly, by continuing the campaign'.

Although d'Aoust got credit from the Representatives by his declamations against the 'muscadins' (say, the 'dandies'), who had proposed to suspend operations, facts and the wintry weather were too much for him, and he had to draw back the troops who had been kept ready for the advance. It was the Spaniards, anxious to secure themselves before taking up winter quarters, who moved. Reinforced by a Portuguese division under Forbes, 6,000 strong, Ricardos took the works at Saint-Féréol,<sup>1</sup> to the north of Céret, on the 26th November. On the 28th November Doctor Doppet, the new commander, arrived and found the army in as bad a state as Turreau had represented it to be. Many of the men were unarmed, some had tents without straw, others were in the rain without any shelter, an infinity of horses and mules were dying of starvation, the Generals were quarrelling, and the head-quarter office was in such a state that, when Ricardos wrote about a previous arrangement as to feeding prisoners, Doppet had to write to Paris because there was no copy of what had passed. As for Doppet himself, I have already tried to describe him, and obviously he was not the man to control the headstrong Representatives, who practically disregarded him.

Ricardos soon delivered his next stroke. Having first fainted at the French right, on the night of the 6th December he prepared to attack their works at Villelongue at daybreak on the 7th. By chance the French garrison of Villelongue chose the same hour for an attack on the post of Montesquieu, above them in the hills. Poor Doppet knew nothing of the plans of his own army, but by some prisoners he did ascertain what the Spaniards were about to attempt, and he sent word to Villelongue to be on its guard. No notice was taken of this warning, and that night two columns, 3,000 French from Villelongue, and 5,000 Spaniards making for Villelongue, were groping their way

<sup>1</sup> Or Féréol.



past one another in the dark. At daybreak the Spaniards swept the camp of Villelongue, almost abandoned as it was, when the French column, seeing itself threatened and the Spanish cavalry rushing for the plain to cut off its retreat, broke and ran for the Brouilla ford across the Tech. The volunteer battalion to which the future General Pelleport belonged formed at first a rear-guard but soon broke, and, throwing away its arms and accoutrements, ran for two or three hours, only rallying under Perpignan. No one was surprised, and the only notice taken was to replace all that the men had lost. Meantime poor Doppet, having ordered a column to be pushed out in order to draw off the pressure on Villelongue (where he had heard fighting), passed the morning in search of his army, until at last he came on the fugitives. This affair reduced the army to 20,000 men, of whom only half had muskets; and half again of the muskets were useless from their locks' being out of order. Many men had no bayonets. Under these circumstances all that Doppet could do was to denounce the *ci-devant* Nobles of his army, who obviously must be to blame. The Representatives supported him in this and, while even d'Aoust was temporarily suspended, several Generals perished, one of whom, with the evil desire of the Republicans to degrade their victims, was guillotined by the executioner's wife.

Doppet now received an extraordinary order from the *Comité*: he was to retain 15,000 men only, garrisons included, and to send all the rest to the force besieging Toulon. To make matters worse, none of the new levy were to go, and the army had so few of other troops that none but these raw battalions would have been left. So absurd was the order that it had to be cancelled and the reinforcements for Toulon were to be taken from the troops forming in rear, some 6,000 or more being ordered from the camp under Toulouse, where Marbot, *père*, commanded. Two Adjutant-Generals, Boissier and Augereau, actually marched from Toulouse with part of this detachment, and reached Toulon, but only after that place had been captured. General Dugommier, who had commanded during the siege, praised both the appearance and the discipline of the troops brought by Boissier and Augereau, so it is probable that the drilling at Toulouse had done good: and Augereau and his men then marched to join the active part of the Armée des Pyrénées

Orientales. General Marbot was stopped on his way to Toulon with reinforcements, and ordered back to join Pyrénées Orientales. It seems as if this was the first time that Augereau had taken an active part in the campaign, for hitherto we only read of him as at Toulouse or with the draft for Toulon. The strangest thing is that on the 25th December he was promoted General of Division. At that date he must have been either before Toulon or on his way back and, if he had not been fighting, one does not understand how he got that rank on the same day as did Pérignon, who had certainly won it in the field. One would imagine some mistake: indeed in the 'Fastes du Légion d'honneur' he is shown as only General of Brigade in 1794.

Meantime the unfortunate Doppet had to plan how to draw back his troops to the *Camp de L'Union* under Perpignan, for with the strength to which he was to be reduced he could no longer hold his former front. He had a really good idea: he would cover the withdrawal of his heavy artillery by a sudden attack on the Spanish works at Villelongue. The Representatives approved, but entrusted the attack to their favourite, d'Aoust. It was to be made by two columns, one under Laterrade, and the other, which d'Aoust was to accompany, under Sauret. Captain Lannes, wounded, as we have seen, was in hospital at Perpignan. He still had his arm in a sling when he received a letter from General Basset, who had heard that his wound was going on well and that he could ride: 'J'ai besoin de toi', he wrote. Lannes jumped on horseback and soon reached the camp, where he found that Basset, having been directed to form a body of grenadiers to storm the works and to choose the Captain most worthy to head these men, had selected him. Basset did not wish to give this honour to another, for he knew that the grenadiers of Lannes' battalion would be very glad to see him with them. Accordingly, when d'Aoust started on the night of the 18th December with some 2,000 men, Lannes led 500 grenadiers and chasseurs, all picked men. According to General Thoumas, Lannes was perfectly successful, carrying the great redoubt after the other works. Fervel says that Laterrade's column, carrying the outer works, was checked, as was that of Sauret, until two colonels, Guieu and Banel, both to be known in Italy, penetrated by the gorge of the redoubt, when the whole camp was seized and the Portuguese garrison massacred.

Fifteen guns were captured and removed. Lannes most certainly distinguished himself: d'Aoust, taking him by the hand, told him he had acted perfectly and deserved a recompense for which he would not wait long. 'Return to Perpignan to complete the cure of your wound: you will carry to the Mayor the bulletin of victory.' On the 25th December accordingly, when Augereau and Pérignon attained divisional rank, Lannes became Colonel, Adjutant-General. While d'Aoust, the real commander, had been storming Villelongue, the nominal Commander-in-chief, Doppet, as if to keep him out of mischief, had been given a column to remain by Elne on the Tech, with instructions not to advance until d'Aoust gave him a signal by means of rockets, when he was to join in. All night Doppet waited, crossing and recrossing the river in his anxiety, but no signal appeared, d'Aoust afterwards explaining that he had lost his rockets. Worn out and struck by the disease which was thinning the ranks of the army by 10,000 men, Doppet went back to Perpignan and took to his bed, which he did not leave for two and a half months. Lannes also remained in Perpignan, passing the time in making love to Mlle. Méric, whom he married in 1795 and divorced on his return from Egypt in 1799.

D'Aoust now formally took the command at an ill-omened moment for himself and for the army. The Spaniards, under La Cuesta, who acted well and quickly, on the 20th December struck and overthrew the French left by the sea, won the fort of Saint-Elme by the treason of its commander, and bullied the main fort, Collioure, into surrender, by bringing up three battalions at night with torches to burn the houses. They thus drove the French from the sea coast. D'Aoust, hearing of this disaster, began his retreat on Perpignan on the 21st December, but the Spaniards pressed hard on him in the centre, the Portuguese did the same on the right, while the Spanish cavalry, crossing the Tech at Brouilla, was sweeping round to cut the road in rear, so that a great catastrophe seemed at hand. Fortunately, General of Brigade Pérignon stood firm at Saint-Luc and kept back the Portuguese, when Ricardos, apt to be timid, halted; and, with Pérignon forming the rear-guard, the French army at last got back under Perpignan after losing only some 7,700 men and 23 guns. This retreat was very galling to the *Comité* and to the Convention, for all the other armies of France, stretched around



her long frontiers and coast, had been victorious, and the Convention was indignant that an army of the Republic should fly before 'the ignorant soldiers of the tyrant of Madrid', while the Spanish and English 'slaves' fled from Toulon. A special address of the Convention reproached the unfortunate army for the defeat, the responsibility for which lay so near the door of the Convention itself. No army had been more in the hands of the Representatives of the body which now blamed it, and none had been so unwisely handled. As for the unfortunate d'Aoust, he had hoped that the victory at Villelongue would have covered the retreat, but the Convention saw only in this an attempt to hide a great disaster under the account of one brilliant day. Fresh Representatives had arrived: Fabre had fallen in the disaster to the left, and his other patrons had been recalled. Sadly, d'Aoust led back his troops to the *Camp de l'Union*: there the executioner awaited him and put his hand on his shoulder: he had to follow.

## X

### DUGOMMIER

(January to September 1794)

Reorganization of the French army in the eastern Pyrenees. Dugommier's victory at Boulou. Augereau crosses the frontier with the right wing. His successes.

#### CONTEMPORARY EVENTS

- 1794    18th May. Battle of Tourcoing.  
         1st June. Victory of Lord Howe at sea.  
         26th June. Battle of Fleurus.  
         10th July. French enter Brussels.  
         27th July. End of the Terror.

IN January 1794 took place the great change in 'Pyrénées Orientales', which for the first time became worthy of the name of an army. Toulon had been taken by Dugommier on the 19th December 1793, and the besieging force now became available for other work. Without actually removing Doppet from command of 'Pyrénées Orientales', the *Comité* ordered Dugommier to fill his place temporarily until his recovery. I have already given Dugommier's character; he came with prestige far different from that of any of his predecessors, for, besides his successes at Toulon, he was himself a Member of the Convention and, consequently, a colleague of the Representatives with the army. The force before Toulon was to be broken up; part went to the Armée des Alpes, and most of the rest were to accompany Dugommier to his new command. He himself wished that, as nothing could well be done in the Alps during the winter, all his troops should go with him and be thrown on the Spaniards to finish the war speedily. This did not suit the *Comité*, and he was permitted to bring 10,500 men only; and even these, much to his annoyance, were sifted by the Representatives before Toulon to prevent his choosing his best troops. It was the same with the officers, and, though he got Victor, he had to leave with much regret his young commandant of artillery, Lieut.-Colonel Bonaparte. However, as Bonaparte soon was promoted General of Brigade and commanded the artillery of the Armée

d'Italie, Dugommier made use of their friendship to draw supplies from him. 'I fully hope' he wrote, 'that my brave friend Bonaparte will not neglect any of the care that he can give us. . . . I swear to you that you will deserve well of the country, and your sincere friend will thank you'. His letter is a good refutation of the statement of the lying Barras as to the relations of the two men.<sup>1</sup>

The new commander was helped by two changes—a change in the direction of the war from the French side, and a change in its direction from the Spanish side. So far, this army had been in the hands of the Representatives to an extent unknown elsewhere. This may have been due partly to the weakness of the regular military element in it, and partly to the fact that several of the Representatives were natives of the region, hot-blooded Southerners with 'many men to place', as the Minister's agent complained. The open way in which they had claimed power on the field is astonishing. Fabre, for instance, proclaimed the uselessness of any Commander-in-Chief, and publicly demanded the suppression of that office. His colleague, Guiter, went farther. 'What good are Generals?' cried he, 'The women of our *faubourgs* know as much as they do. Calculations, calm combinations, tents, camps, redoubts? All these are useless. Irruptions, cold steel, that is the only warfare which henceforward suits the French democratic spirit.' Yet another, Gaston, was quite ready to fill the gap to be left by the removal of the Generals. 'I know', said he, 'neither Generals nor special powers. As to the Minister, he is like a dog on a race course. I alone should command here, and I shall be obeyed.' This man had been a Marquis, but no full-blooded democrat could outdo this claim. Even Fabre, however, required some assistance in managing an army, and he appealed to the Jacobins of Paris to send him one hundred good Jacobins to evangelize the army. These 'Civic Apostles' were sent, who, distributing themselves amongst the staff and in other employments, spread disorder and indiscipline in the ranks. Envious of the position of the commanders, the Representatives had been also jealous of one another. When Dagobert was about to attack Trouillas, he had to deal with two of them, Cassanyès and Fabre. The first had played a prominent part at Peyrestortes, and

<sup>1</sup> Barras, i. 122-3.



Fabre had wailed, 'When then shall I myself also have my victory?' Now he thought he saw his opportunity and he implored Cassanyès to leave him alone with Dagobert. He was granted death on the battle-field. Cassanyès, had he known it, had run great risks at Peyrestortes, for a gunner, too much attached to him, had chosen to follow him throughout the day, to defend him if he could, or else to save him from being made prisoner by blowing out his brains!

Now, however, these Representatives were gone, and Dugommier was on good terms with Soubrany and Milhaud, who came with him to fill their places; besides, he was not the man to let himself be kept in leading strings. Their zeal as patriots was satisfied by allowing them to fall on the former Generals and, imitating consciously or not Saint-Just and Le Bas with the Armée du Rhin, they punished in one way or another a mass of officers, some no doubt bad but others really good, for instance, the old General Soulérac, whom Pérignon esteemed and regretted. But they did also turn their attention to their proper work, the supply of the army and organization of the Departments. For instance, although the Representatives with the Armée des Alpes wanted to retain all the stores at Lyons for their troops, and declared that it was drawing blood from their veins to ask for anything for the Pyrénées, Soubrany and Milhaud succeeded in wrenching from them the forage for want of which the cavalry was perishing. It is significant that in Dugommier's first report to the *Comité* after his arrival he mentions his pleasure in finding in the two fresh Representatives sent with him men decided to leave to the Generals the full exercise of their functions, limiting themselves to giving to their own work all the activity they could. This, he said, would well suffice to occupy them, considering the state of the supply of the army. I have explained how useful the Representatives could have been in rear in looking after supplies and reinforcements and using their great powers to overcome obstacles in this work.<sup>1</sup> With no other army was this so necessary, for the 'Pyrénées Orientales' suffered very much from the fact that the men and stores due to it were diverted to the armies of 'Alpes', 'Italie', 'Toulon', &c., by other Representatives with those bodies. Dugommier's first report states that half his men either

<sup>1</sup> Phipps, i. Chapter II.

had no arms or bad ones, that seven-eighths of the muskets had no bayonets, that his artillery scarcely existed, and that the horses of the cavalry and train were starving for want of forage. The supply of food was precarious, and the appearance and clothing of the men were very bad. The volunteers who had originally filled the battalions had fallen by the sword or disease, so that these battalions had been almost entirely renewed. This was the army which the Representative Fabre would have thrown into Spain in spite of the remonstrance of 'the soldier' Dagobert, and which the experienced and not over-cautious Dugommier would not move until he had remodelled it. Fabre had bought some forgiveness by dying in the catastrophe at Collioure which he had done so much to cause; but for how many deaths on the field and in camp was he not responsible? Milhaud, one of the new Representatives, was to become the well-known cavalry General of the Empire and in 1808 was to lead his Dragoon Division into Spain.<sup>1</sup> One wonders if, as he then looked down the well-filled and perfectly equipped ranks of his regiments, he ever thought of the motley, starving, half-armed army he had known in 1794. As for the Minister for War, in 1792, Carnot, one of the Representatives sent here, had denounced what was either, he said, the ill-will or the absolute incapacity of Pache, the holder of that office, the man whom Dumouriez had attacked, whilst Bouchotte, one of Pache's successors, was looking after the buttons on the breeches of those fortunate men who had such garments, and which to his horror in many cases bore the hated *fleur-de-lis*.

The second change, that which concerned the Spanish side, was that Ricardos was dead. Called to Madrid to consult about the campaign, he had died on the 13th March 1794, rumour said from having taken in the house of Godoy, the King's favourite, a cup of poisoned chocolate intended for the Prince. O'Reilly, his successor, an Irishman, set off for the army, but was seized with violent colics and died on the 23rd March. Eventually, after a short interim of Amarillas, the Conde de la Unión was given the permanent command. An honourable, brave man,

<sup>1</sup> Général Comte Jean-Baptiste (*alias* Édouard-Jean-Baptiste) Milhaud (1766–1833), Member of the Convention, Regicide, Cavalry General under the Empire, commanded the 4th Cavalry Corps (Cuirassiers) at Waterloo: *Fastes*, iii. 401–3.

he had already distinguished himself here during the 1793 campaign, but he was disheartened by the state of the army, and thrice refused the appointment, saying that an angel, not a man, was required. It was unfortunate for Spain that the King, who valued him highly, insisted on his accepting, for, as we shall see, he had great defects as a Commander-in-Chief. Had Ricardos lived, he would hardly have fallen into those faults of his successor which gave victory to the French, while the jealousies amongst the other Generals caused by the selection of so young an officer would not have arisen.<sup>1</sup>

Dugommier made great alterations in the organization of his army, which he considered had hitherto been enfeebled by mixing the raw with the trained men. Here, as in La Vendée, the battalions of the new levy, on arriving with the army, had refused to be employed for their proper work and to be broken up to fill the ranks of the old battalions. The *embrigadement* had not gone far, only two regiments having been formed, and Dugommier now stopped it altogether, believing it would but weaken the old battalions by flooding them with recruits. He divided his troops into three categories. First came picked companies of grenadiers and battalions of Chasseurs. Here, as in most of the other armies, the grenadier formation broke down, and the men had to be sent back to their regiments, but the Chasseurs were very good, and much of the successes we shall find Augereau obtaining were due to what he himself called his heroic, his invincible, Chasseurs. Next to these marched the Line, the good battalions, and the best portions of others. Lastly came what he styled 'the force of inertia'. These were men who did not yet know right from left, and who, hardly able to load their muskets, turned away their heads when they had to fire them. These cheerful soldiers were kept in rear, or sent to camps of instruction, besides guarding the numerous posts in the district of the army extending to the mouth of the Rhône. However, some even of these men we shall find brought on the field to make a show of numbers, at a distance suitable to their absurd condition. Dugommier attached great importance to adhering to this arrangement, and, when Augereau mixed the two lines for a moment, he refused to let the army move till the

<sup>1</sup> Don Luis-Fermín de Carvajal y Vargas (1752-94), *Michaud*, xlvii. 184-7; Fervel, ii. 39-40 note; Chuquet, *Dugommier*, 251-5.



'confusion' was rectified. It shows how bad the state of the army had been that one great step in advance was to group the firearms according to their nature, for the men had hitherto carried indiscriminately muskets and fowling pieces. The first thing was to get the various calibres together, but eventually all except some 5,000 or 6,000 had to be replaced. The light artillery was increased and improved, and every effort was made to get the unfortunate cavalry into shape, for that arm had suffered most from want of subsistence. The hospitals had been in a fearful state: Dugommier declared that the most robust health would be ruined in a few days there, and the men constantly tried to get out of them, whilst the sick were carted to the rear as so many spoilt goods. 'Il n'y avait de philanthropie que dans les discours d'apparat', says one indignant sufferer.<sup>1</sup> When all was done, the army had been heavily reinforced, for, besides the 10,500 brought from Toulon, seven battalions, nominally 7,000 men, had been sent from 'Pyrénées Occidentales' and 6,000 had come up from Toulouse, where they had been drilled. Altogether Dugommier had 28,000 men on whom he could count to fight, beside 'the force of inertia', 5,000 recruits, and 25,000 men in rear in the camps of instruction or in garrisons; he was naturally vexed when Barère told the Convention that he had 60,000 men.

Having trained his men by constant slight attacks on the enemy, Dugommier had his army at last ready. Augereau led the right wing, 6,300 strong, the finest and, thanks to him, the best drilled and the highest disciplined troops in the army. His own striking figure, always throughout his life that of a glorified drum-major, and the fervour of his patriotic sentiments, made him popular, and his men, seeing his ceaseless activity, bore with pride the burden of an order and discipline which they had in earlier days stigmatized as slavery. His style pleased Dugommier who preferred him to the calmer, more methodic Pérignon, and trusted him to do the best under whatever circumstances he might find himself. How Augereau suddenly leapt into this position and still more how he was so well fitted for it, is, as I have already said, hard to understand, for few men seem to have had less training, and now, constantly visiting his outposts, he was always ready to defend himself or to

<sup>1</sup> Pelleport, i. 20-2.

support others. Pérignon had the centre, the strongest body, 12,500 men. We have seen that he had won his way up fairly enough. As brave, but quieter, and more modest than the swaggering Augereau, he had the confidence of his own men and it is to the credit of the army that he was considered to have higher qualities for command than his pushing rival. Both Generals had some independence of character: we have seen Augereau criticizing the Generals, which many might have done, and also the Representatives, which few dared to do, while Pérignon did not shrink from expressing his regret at some of the supersessions which rained on the army. The left, 5,000 strong, was under Sauret, who had received a sabre cut on his head and a commission at Rosbach in the Seven Years War, and who, fighting well in this campaign at the head of one of the few regular infantry regiments with the army, had won divisional rank at the same time as Pérignon and Augereau.<sup>1</sup> He was to serve under Bonaparte in Italy. The Reserve, 3,000 men, was under General of Brigade Victor. Pérignon said that Victor had great talents, and united all the qualities which could be desired in a General. His post, which, as we shall see, was at first by the coast, was an important one, for the Spanish fleet had its own way in these waters, and a landing was always to be guarded against. La Barre led the cavalry, which at last had some 2,000 sabres, and in which Bessières served as assistant to the *adjudant-major-général des Chasseurs*. La Barre had served in America as a Lieutenant of Dragoons and had won his brigade under Toulon. An ex-noble, he had made himself popular, although maintaining discipline, and was a fine leader. He was to fall soon, when he was succeeded by Dugua, another officer of the *ancien régime*, who had followed Dugommier from Toulon, and who, after serving in Italy and Egypt, was to die at San Domingo.<sup>2</sup> The cavalry was under constant strain, for the necessary forage could be seldom obtained. Later in the year the horses got no hay for three days. Mamet, the colonel of Bessières' regiment of Chasseurs, when told by Dugommier to feed his horses on grass and straw, replied that there was none

<sup>1</sup> Général Baron François Franconin-Sauret (1742-1818), *Fervel*, ii. 11-12; Chuquet, *Dugommier*, 199-200.

<sup>2</sup> Général Charles-François-Joseph Dugua (1740-1802), *Biog. des Cont.*, ii. 1458-9.

where he was, and that, rather than stay and see his chargers dying, he would bivouac with the outposts, carbine in hand. Indeed on the 27th October 1794 Dugommier himself could not start from Boulou to review some troops, as the commissariat refused to deliver more than half rations of forage to him and to his staff.

The *Comité* had ordered that the forts on the coast, lost in September 1793, should be recovered with the help of a fleet, but the ships did not appear, and, with many misgivings, Dugommier departed from his instructions. The Spaniards had for long been strengthening their works in the Camp de Boulou, even beyond their power of occupying them. Firmly based on the Tech, with the mass of mountains at their back, they thought themselves secure, except at the bridge of Céret. They were anxious as to their hold on this, and their centre and left had drawn away from their right, which was by the sea coast, leaving a gap which afforded access to the mountains behind them. Dugommier proposed to send Pérignon through this gap into the mountains behind Boulou, right in rear of the enemy. First Augereau was to tempt the Spanish left forward by threatening Céret. This he did with much skill, so that La Unión, who had won distinction by defending Céret when only a General of Division, fell into the snare and threw some 8,000 of his troops on the left bank of the Tech into the Aspres hills, to the north-west of Céret, in order to crush Augereau. Besides the 8,000 Spaniards facing Augereau, and as many in the Camp de Boulou, they had 6,900 in their coast division at Collioure, but they had few troops on the right bank of the Tech to cover the gap between their right and centre. While Sauret's left division, 4,695 strong, having Victor's brigade, 2,669, in rear in support, faced the Collioure division, Pérignon was launched into the gap with his centre division, 8,573 infantry, and almost all the cavalry of the army, 1,357 strong, supported by a reserve of 6,325 infantry and 550 cavalry, so that he had altogether 17,000 men to meet 2,800 of the enemy. Pérignon began his advance before midnight on the 29th April, and, crossing the Tech below Boulou, he struck for Montesquieu, the fortified post below the unoccupied crest of the ridge which he was to seize. By 8 a.m. on the 30th April he stood on the hills above and in rear of the enemy, but, believing the Spaniards would evacuate Montesquieu



below when they saw his troops, he thought he would save his men the actual assault. Turning to the Representative Milhaud, he said, 'This post has been attacked twenty times in the last campaign, and twenty times we have been repulsed from it: still, in an hour I will get you in'. Too impatient to wait, Milhaud ran forward and set some men in motion, when Pérignon ordered the assault, and by 2 p.m. he held the post. This was a brilliant affair, long remembered by those who took part in it, and amongst them were four men who had served together in the 2nd volunteer battalion of Gers, Colonel Lannes, Banel, Boyer, and Lagrange.<sup>1</sup> The Spaniards awoke but slowly to the situation. In front of them were Augereau and Sauret, the apparent strength of their troops made the greater by the display of 8,000 of the raw levies, probably armed only with pikes, but making a good show as they stood on the heights of Tresserre, just north of Céret itself. In the rear of the enemy was Pérignon, who had been reinforced by Victor's brigade and all the cavalry, so that he now had two-thirds of the army under him. Night fell on his fires blazing above the discomfited Spaniards.

On the 1st May, the second day of this battle, the fruits of Pérignon's stroke were reaped. Had Ricardos been alive and in command, it is probable that he would have concentrated and have thrown himself on Pérignon: Morla, the chief of the Spanish staff, counselled this plan, by which the great road to Spain could have been reached, and the guns carried off while the right wing at Collioure would make its own way back; but the majority was against making the attempt and decided to retire by the Col Portell. To reach this they had to pass along the river, and the French in front and in rear, closing in, took them between the upper and lower mill-stones. For the first time the French cavalry had its chance. La Barre had massed them behind the Trompettes Basses, below Boulou, and when he saw the enemy there begin to retreat, he sent part of his force under Quesnel to pursue on the right bank of the Tech, and himself, taking his two best regiments, the 1st Hussars and the 22nd

<sup>1</sup> Fervel, ii. 51 and 52 note. Général Baron Joseph Boyer (1761-1830), who served in Italy but had to retire on account of deafness from wounds, *Fastes*, iii. 104-5. Général Comte Joseph Lagrange (1763-1836). *Fastes*, iii. 302-3, who led a division in Egypt against the English.

Chasseurs, dashed across the river<sup>\*</sup> to gallop up the left bank and cross back again to the right shore by the ford of Saint-Jean between Boulou and the Céret bridge, so as to cut off the retreat of the enemy. Still, the mass of what was soon a mere broken rout of fugitives got over the Céret bridge; at last, however, La Barre reached the bridge and Bessières' squadron broke down the resistance. Pressed on all sides, the Spaniards fled over the frontier, losing all their artillery and baggage. The French reaped 150 guns and 1,800 horses and mules: they killed 1,500 Spaniards and captured the same number, such a spoil as the other end of the Pyrenees was to see at Vitoria. The French loss had been wonderfully small, hardly any indeed on the second day. The day after the second battle Lannes was entrusted with a work as honourable and almost as dangerous as the assault on Montesquieu. Amongst the prisoners were a good number of *émigrés*, who, according to the orders of the Convention, should have been shot, but Dugommier was not yet so embittered as he became later, and he and Pérignon determined to spare these men. It was Colonel Lannes who had to hand them over to the enemy, a task which might easily have cost him his head.<sup>1</sup>

Many Generals have known how to gain victory, but few have known how to make full use of it when won. Nothing is so instructive as to compare Dugommier, when he crossed the Pyrenees in 1794, with his late subordinate Bonaparte, when that General crossed the Maritime Alps in 1796. On the 1st May Dugommier had completely crushed the enemy in his front, and the road into Spain was open to him. Yet Pérignon was allowed to remain motionless for four days, while even the impetuous Augereau did not really commence the pursuit until the 4th May, and when, without orders, he launched himself on the Muga and seized the foundry, Dugommier was alarmed: 'Nous voilà donc en Espagne!' he cried, and he thanked Pérignon for not following the example. It was not till the 18th November that he began his next real advance, and it was only after fighting two battles with the enemy, who had made good use of

<sup>1</sup> Thoumas, *Lannes*, 10, makes Lannes command two battalions of Gers. It is odd that Chuquet, *Dugommier*, 267-8 does not show any battalion of Gers as with the army, nor the 105th Regiment, in which they were amalgamated. This must be an error.

the pause, that on the 22nd of that month his army, now under Pérignon, had reached Figueras. This town is twenty miles from Boulou, and he could have reached it without firing another shot on the 4th May. This too when the proper conduct was so evident that such a man as General Dugua was suggesting that, if the delay was not due to egotism or ignorance, there might be some criminal motive. Bonaparte won Dego on the 15th April 1796, and on the 14th May his first troops under Masséna entered Milan, some hundred miles off, although he had not delivered so crushing a blow as that of Dugommier, and although he had to fight and cross rivers on his way. Most officers doubtless believe that they too could grasp the skirts of chance, but the commander who sees his troops exhausted at the end of a battle seldom dares to throw the worn and confused mass in pursuit of an enemy whose full rout he does not understand; and it is fair to remember that even Wellington after Waterloo did not realize more than many of his officers how crushing the day had been for the French. These are things which should tend to humbleness on the part of students and critics. It was partly anxiety to carry out the orders of the *Comité* and to clear the French soil of the enemy that led Dugommier to waste time in besieging the works on the coast, at Collioure, for instance. While Pérignon blockaded Bellegarde, the fort guarding the main road to Spain, Dugommier devoted himself to the siege of Collioure and the coast works with Sauret's left wing and Victor's reserve. The work was hard, and Dugommier himself was wounded in a sortie made by the enemy on the night of the 16th May, as was Victor in an assault on the 22nd May when the Representative Soubrany insisted on a column's engaging against the instructions of Dugommier. Dugommier's experience at Toulon no doubt was useful to him here, but he and his troops had to bear much hardship. He described himself as writing from a fox earth on a very windy mountain, with only the consolation that he would soon become a wolf, but the last coast-work, Collioure, capitulated on the 26th May. Next day the garrison, 7,000 strong, laid down their arms at Banyuls, and Victor, named commandant of Collioure, soon announced in rhapsodical fashion to the inhabitants that the Convention had ordered the erection there of an obelisk to commemorate the event. Sauret's division fell back for a time into Roussillon



and then later was brought up to where Pérignon was blockading Bellegarde, whilst Victor's brigade was left to cover Collioure and the coast at the Col de Banyuls.

The capitulation of Collioure gave rise to two incidents: one curious enough. The first was pleasing though characteristic of a mood that was soon to pass. In the formal terms Dugommier had required the surrender of a legion of *émigrés*, known to be in the place, and the Spanish governor at once acquiesced, only remarking that he believed there were none: then he sent the *émigrés* off in boats, while the French winked at the infraction of the terms. The other matter was more serious and had lamentable results. The garrison was to be exchanged for the same number of French prisoners in Spain, and these men were not to serve against France or Spain respectively; but La Unión, receiving his own men, refused to give up the equivalent. He declared that the capitulation was absurd and was null without his consent. Why should he give up so many French, who, it was true, could not be employed against Spain itself, but who could be used against the allies of Spain, whilst in return he was to receive men of no further use to him: that is to say, he avoided the snare into which the Allies fell when they allowed the garrisons of Mayence, Valenciennes, and other places, to be employed against the Vendéans. The French, he said, must be content with the possession of the forts and their stores. It must be remembered that the governor of Collioure had no authority for promising the return of prisoners not in his power, but Dugommier, the Representatives, and indeed the army, were indignant at what they naturally considered a gross breach of faith. The truth was that a few hours would have sufficed to refer the capitulation to La Unión, but in that time the Spanish fleet might have carried off the garrison; and Dugommier had already used that argument for not insisting on harsher terms. He now wrote in violent terms to La Unión, who remained firm in his contention, but who made the remarkable offer to submit the question to the arbitration of the United States of America. Wrought up to fury, Dugommier asked the Convention to decree the war with Spain to be one 'of death', as had already been decreed in the war against England; Augereau was prominent in this evil work, telling the Representatives to ask for the decree, 'My brothers in arms of the Right Division await it

with impatience, their motto is "Charge with bayonets" and their rallying word, "War to the Death"'. On the 11th August accordingly the Convention decreed that no more Spanish prisoners should be made, and this decree was for a time carried out, as we shall see. Augereau certainly meant what he said and he and his men kept their word pretty accurately; but Dugommier, angry as he was, would seem to have wished to use the decree mainly as a threat. Not an ungenerous man, he had already, in explaining his conduct towards General O'Hara and others at Toulon, pointed out to the Convention that those who were themselves exposed to reprisals had to count with the future. Still, strange to say, the Spaniards, who were so merciless in later years, now refused to follow the example of their enemies. La Unión took the nobler part when he told his King that, if the decree were passed, it would be more dignified to order his Generals to treat the French, if possible, with yet more humanity than in the past; and the King approved.

All this time Pérignon had been blockading Bellegarde, which Dugommier would not allow him to bombard until Collioure were taken. In this duty he was completely isolated, for the division of Augereau, instead of being brought up to support him, was far away in consequence of a movement to which I have already alluded. Although ordered not to cross the frontier, Augereau had chosen to do so on the 6th May, making for San Lorenzo-de-la-Muga, near which the Spaniards had an important foundry for artillery. This fell into his hands without much resistance, but Dugommier knew nothing of the blow until it had been struck, for his lieutenant had intentionally delayed the dispatch announcing his intention. Dugommier was alarmed: to him this was 'a useless imprudence'. He saw the importance of the destruction of the foundry whence the artillery supplies for the Spanish siege of Bellegarde had been furnished, but he told Augereau that he must not detach himself too far because the army had not yet got either Collioure or Bellegarde. He even wished him to leave a garrison and to fall back over the frontier to Saint-Laurent-de-Cerdans and Prats de Mollo on the Tech. Augereau, however, did not choose to withdraw. His division was completely in the air, and he remained on the Muga, far south of Pérignon, and therefore much exposed to attack by the enemy. But for long the reins had lain slack in the hands of

Dugommier. His wound and the exposure he had undergone during the siege of the coast-works had told on him, and he had even gone back to Narbonne for three weeks' rest, leaving the army much to itself. Now at last he came up to Pérignon's headquarters at La Junquera and took charge of the operations. Even now, however, he let Augereau remain isolated, and it was not till the 19th June that he brought up part of Sauret's division on the left of Pérignon at Cantalops from the rear where it had been resting, while Victor's brigade remained left at the Col de Banyuls. This left Augereau still in his exposed position. Dugommier saw the danger of this and the difficulty of supplying the division, as did his Chief-of-the-Staff, Lamer, but neither did he alter it, nor did he take any measures for the mutual support of his scattered divisions. Had Augereau and Pérignon been working in harmony, even then the peril would have been great, but they were not so working, and Augereau seems to have valued his isolation the more as it kept him from contact with, possibly from subordination to, his rival.

La Unión was to show the danger. He had collected some 15,000 men, not enough to interrupt the siege works, but sufficient to crush the 6,000 of Augereau, and on the 19th May he began his attack on Augereau's position by San Lorenzo-de-la-Muga. Instead, however, of marching *en masse* on the isolated division, he anticipated the tactics of the Austrians in Italy in 1796, and distributed his men in seven columns: five to encircle Augereau, two to ward off any movement by Pérignon. The columns sent against Pérignon, mainly cavalry, kept him quiet, for he knew nothing of the attack on Augereau, and those sent to cut off the retreat of the division and to receive the broken troops also got into place; but there was no retreat to cut. Placed in the middle of the attacking columns, the active Augereau and his well-trained men had easy work in striking right and left, and the Spaniards were routed, leaving 'the ravines strewn with corpses and the rocks stained with blood', for the French had been merciless and had given no quarter. Pérignon, at last understanding the situation, followed the enemy in their retreat from his front. One wonders if in later days, under the golden showers of the Empire, Augereau and his men remembered how they had disclaimed the pecuniary rewards offered for their valour now. Gold now was to them a



'vile metal for slaves, only made to spoil their business'. It was, however, not to slaves that Napoleon gave rank, ribbons, and dotations.

Next came the turn of Pérignon to prove the danger of isolation. Dugommier, alarmed at hearing that the Spaniards were erecting works in his front, ordered Pérignon to reconnoitre them and to disturb their completion. No notice was sent to Augereau, and on the night of the 6th June Pérignon advanced alone by the main road against the centre of the enemy's works on the Llobregat and, crossing the river by the Cabrény's bridge, attacked the works on the right bank. This was more than a demonstration and looks as if he too wished to have his victory, but the Spaniards were strong in cavalry and La Unión now threw all his horse on Pérignon's flank. Labarre, the French cavalry commander, had a small body of horse which might have delayed the Spaniards; but, unfortunately, the Representative Soubrany, a former cavalry officer, was with him, and chose to lead on the body across the river, right into the superior Spanish squadrons, which at once routed them. Pérignon had to draw back, but now Augereau joined in. Always on the watch, he had chanced to be visiting his out-posts at Torradas, that is, on the left and almost in rear of the enemy who were following up Pérignon, and he at once moved forward and attacked the Spanish camp at Llers. Pérignon's retreat, however, involved his own, and both divisions returned to their original ground. Labarre was mortally wounded, and Dugua succeeded him at the head of the cavalry. It is to be presumed that Bessières served under Labarre this day. Dugommier blamed Pérignon, who apparently had pushed matters farther than had been intended, but it was extraordinary that even a demonstration should have been ordered by the Commander-in-Chief without securing that Augereau should support it. To neglect his co-operation was to invite disaster.

Dugommier, as I have said, chose to treat Doppet, commanding the Cerdagne division, as independent of him, but he now arranged with that General, who had 12,886 men, to make an expedition on Ripoll, in order to destroy a large Spanish manufactory for arms. This Doppet succeeded in doing on the 11th June, but he wasted time, and La Unión struck at him as at Augereau. Doppet had to retreat, but Augereau, who had been

directed to support him, sent out a flanking force under Lemoine. This affects us, for when Lemoine's communications were cut by the Spaniards, Augereau, in order to restore them, pushed out another column of 1,200 men under Colonel Lannes, who had been specially detached for this purpose from Pérignon's centre division. Lannes pierced the screen that intervened between him and Lemoine, who got back in safety. From this time Lannes belonged to the fine fighting division of Augereau, and the two men seem to have suited one another. La Cuesta, taking advantage of Doppet's absence from the Cerdagne, made an irruption there, but was beaten off just as Doppet retired, and after this the Spaniards left that district alone until just before the end of the war. Doppet again fell ill, and on the 15th September handed over his command in the Cerdagne to Charlet.

Some of Dugommier's cares were caused by an incident which might have altered much history. Bonaparte, whom he had left at Toulon and who was now General of Brigade, commanding the artillery of the Armée d'Italie, had much influence there and gained the ear of the Representatives with that force, especially that of Augustin Robespierre, the younger brother of the bloodthirsty demagogue. He proposed to remain on the defensive on the frontier of Spain, for that nation was only redoubtable when 'pressée chez elle'. What would be the good, said the sagacious Bonaparte, of taking Madrid? He proposed to bring 6,000 men from the Pyrénées Orientales, others from Pyrénées Occidentales; and with the Armée d'Italie thus reinforced to advance into Lombardy, and, moving by the Tyrolese passes, act in concert with the Armée du Rhin. Carnot objected, and wished to keep 'Alpes' and 'Italie' on the defensive; but the young Robespierre went to Paris and with the assistance of his brother bore down all opposition. For us the remarkable point about all this was that, although Bonaparte was on the best of terms with Dumerbion, the commander of 'Italie', his plan would have led to Dugommier's superseding him. The combination of the two men, Dugommier and Bonaparte, might have gone far, for, whilst Dugommier was quite capable of striking well and hard, Bonaparte might have been able to carry him on after victory. Dugommier would doubtless have brought his favourite, Augereau, and probably also Victor,

so that under this plan the triumphs of 1796 might have been achieved in 1794 by much the same men, but to the credit of Dugommier. One mistake, however, had been made, for Dugommier, learning by a premature request for troops from the Representatives with 'Italie' that his army was to be weakened, and not knowing that he was to lead such an enterprise, objected loudly. Then, on the 27th July 1794, came Thermidor and the fall of Robespierre. Carnot retook his ascendancy in matters of war and condemned Bonaparte's scheme, which, said that wiseacre, would expose the frontiers of France, abandon Corsica, deliver Toulon and the rear of the army to invasion, and paralyse the armies of the Republic. Such was the difference between the 'Organizer of Victory' and the future Emperor. Dugommier was ordered to consult with Moncey for the resumption of hostilities, and he was now able to turn his undivided attention to the strange state of affairs in front of him.

Bellegarde still held out, and La Unión, becoming bolder, struck at both wings of the French on the 13th August. Dugommier had 34,000 combatants, 9,000 on each flank and 16,000 under Pérignon in the centre, while the Spaniards had 45,000, including 4,000 good cavalry. Some 22,000 Spaniards marched against the 9,000 of Augereau but, although they repeated what I may call the 'Rivoli' tactics of the Austrians, this time it was only six columns that moved, but all were to converge on the 'Fonderie'. Augereau had not placed his brigades well, the Spaniards fought determinedly and the struggle lasted sixteen hours, Mirabel, the best of the brigadiers, falling in it. Augereau's quick glance and rapid strokes, and the bravery and tenacity of his men, at last told, and the French eventually recovered the field they had at one time lost. They had given little quarter, killing 80 officers and 1,256 men, but 140 prisoners were spared, as Augereau said, 'notwithstanding the oaths to slay all'. On the left Sauret had repulsed the attack on him, while Victor's brigade, holding the Col de Banyuls, had dealt with a force landing from the Spanish ships, which had to take again to its boats. The day had been victorious, but the army mourned for Mirabel. While Dugommier praised Augereau and declared that the right wing had saved the blockade of Bellegarde, Augereau himself was uneasy at his position, for he had lost heavily and



his guns were worn. He thought it would be cowardly to abandon the mountains for which he had fought so strenuously, but San Lorenzo-de-la-Muga was untenable, were it only from the corpses which lay on the banks of the torrent, and which he had not been able to bury or burn. He wrote like Bonaparte before Arcola,<sup>1</sup> and wanted a reinforcement of 3,000 men. This at last forced the hand of Dugommier for good. He did send Augereau 3,000, taken from Pérignon and from Sauret, but he also called him in towards the centre. The only strange thing is that he had not long before put an end to a dissemination of troops which, as he told Pérignon, he had long disapproved of. Destroying the foundry, Augereau marched north-east to Darnius, where he was in touch with Pérignon on the main road to Figueras. Figueras was separated only by a ravine from Sauret, who also had drawn in to the centre and was now at Camp Céret, the front of the army being curiously broken. On the 17th September Bellegarde at last surrendered, an event memorable because this fortress, only held by some 1,000 men, had been the last point on French territory occupied by any enemy. On the North France had liberated her territory, and now Bellegarde became Sud-Libre, as Condé had been changed into Nord-Libre. Dugommier had the courage to save the captured garrison, alleging to the Convention that the fortress might have been relieved by La Unión, or else have been blown up by the defenders, and the Convention was too happy to be merciless.

<sup>1</sup> *Corr. Nap.*, ii, No. 1182.

## XI

### MONCEY

(July 1794 to April 1795)

Muller's advance in the western Pyrenees. San Sebastian occupied by Moncey. Moncey in command. His talents.

For Contemporary Events see Chapter X.

WE left the *Armée des Pyrénées Occidentales* in February 1794 undergoing reorganization at the hands of Muller, its commander. By the spring of that year Muller was preparing to take the offensive and, as he put it, to acquit the bill of exchange drawn on him by the victory of the sister army at Boulou. His plan was creditable, and was carried out with no serious hitch, but the task was not difficult against a passive enemy, for whilst he had some 30,000 men the enemy had but 20,000, and half of those were only militia: indeed Caro, feeling the danger of his position, had wished to abandon the Baztan valley and to entrench himself in the mountains. When his Court refused to allow this Caro resigned and was succeeded by the old and feeble Colomera. The attention of Spain was concentrated on the progress of the French on the east of the Pyrenees, and they disregarded the west. It is significant of the regard in which Moncey was already held, that he, only recently promoted, was sent to the right to command the strongest column and the one which was to deal the first and most important blow. Whilst Mauco and Marbot kept the enemy in Roncesvalles in check, three columns were formed to seize the Baztan valley, and then marching westwards to roll up the Spanish line on the Bidassoa. On the night of the 24th July Moncey with some 10,000 men (13 battalions and 800 horse) began his march, and coming over the Col de Maya he next day seized the Baztan valley, where his troops enjoyed the sight of the rich country they had reached. That day (25th July) Delaborde, below and to the west of him, crossed the lower Bidassoa from Biriattou to Vera with some 6,000 men (nine battalions and two squadrons) and drove the enemy from their entrenchments. On the 27th July, while Robespierre was being overthrown, Moncey started

from Elizondo in the Baztan valley with 6,000 men and, marching for thirty-two hours by the difficult Echalar (or Atchiola) road across the mountains, he joined Delaborde at Lesaca, whence the two, 12,000 strong, marched west to support the attack of the right column from Hendaye and the mouth of the Bidassoa. It was intended that, when Moncey and Delaborde should arrive, Frègeville with the right column (6,000 men) should cross the river and attack the fortified camp of San Martial, which covered Irun. Frègeville, however, not knowing that Moncey had been delayed in his mountain march, advanced on the 1st August. Then the Spaniards, aware that Moncey and Delaborde were now in their rear, blew up their works and retired with heavy loss. This caused the surrender of the virgin fortress of Fuenterrabia. The position of the columns was now curiously changed, for, while Delaborde and Frègeville were sent south along the Madrid road to Hernani, Moncey moved on across their rear, still westwards, for San Sebastian. This fortress was held by some 1,700 men, but Moncey sent Captain La Tour d'Auvergne to harangue the commandant: his eloquence was successful, and the garrison laid down their arms on the 4th August. Next day Frègeville occupied Tolosa. Besides a mass of prisoners the French had taken all the park of the enemy. It was a fine victory and a worthy pendant to that of Dugommier at Boulou.

After such a triumph it would be strange in any but an army of the Republic to find the commander resigning his post in disgust at the interference of the Representatives. It was, as we have seen, but a few months before that his formidable controllers had been insisting on Muller's talents and patriotism, but he was circumspect, almost timid, in his plans, and had been in conflict with the violence and arbitrariness of the two Representatives, Pinet and Cavaignac, who aspired to rule the army. Now that success had made his head safe, Muller was decided on freeing himself by resigning, and left, praised by the *Comité*, and carrying with him the esteem and regret of the whole army, to which he had endeared himself by his affability and modesty. He was indeed modest, for he gladly went to command a division of the Armée des Alpes, and, whatever is stated in some biographies,<sup>1</sup> he did not, I think, ever command

<sup>1</sup> e.g. Chassin, *Pac.*, iii. 163.



that army. In July 1799 we shall find him organizing the small Armée du Rhin which was to act on the left of Masséna's Armée du Danube. In August 1801, when he was employed in Corsica, Bonaparte sent him to Murat's *Corps d'Observation du Midi* in Italy, telling Murat he was a distinguished soldier, of whom he heard much good, and who, if Murat were called to Paris, could replace him in command, temporarily. He did good service before he retired in 1814.

To the dismay of Moncey, both Muller and the Representatives recommended him, one of the youngest, if not actually the junior, General of Division, for the command-in-chief. The *Comité* approved as did the Convention, and on the 17th August he was appointed. He had served in all ranks, except that of full Colonel, and had ample experience of war. More, he had been successful in each grade. A nervous, irritable man, he had, as sometimes happened, got on better with the Representatives than Muller who, as an Alsatian, one would imagine to have been more phlegmatic: indeed Moncey described himself truly enough as owing everything to them. 'Je suis votre ouvrage', as he put it. Still, he was forty, old for that period. Already he felt his infirmities, and he admitted (what many men were to observe) his extreme sensibility. 'Cette sensibilité éprouve mon âme de manière à la rendre stupide.' Writing to Muller, to the Representatives, to the *Commission de l'organisation et du mouvement des armées de terre*, and even to the *Comité* itself, he drew a melancholy picture of himself. Always irresolute, always undecided, he would compromise the interests of the Republic, 'and I should infallibly justify the wish of those who want to ruin me.' This last sentence probably expressed one great reason for his disclaimer. His promotion, coming from the Representatives, had already made him enemies, for, whilst some men shrank from power, others were avid of it. It would not be pleasant, it might well be dangerous, to command men senior in the service, who had expected his post; and, if his operations did not really suffer, at the end of the war his enemies might find opportunity of striking at him. However, the Representatives and the Commission found only proof of his modesty in his warm disclaimers, and he had to serve. If he had known it, better times and freer hands for commanders were come. On the 9th Thermidor (27th July 1794), while

Moncey had been making his painful march from Elizondo, Robespierre had been shouted down in the Convention, and the Reign of Terror was over. His formidable friends the Representatives Pinet and Cavaignac with their colleague Dartigoeyte, were replaced by men of another, milder, type, and were soon fighting for their own lives before the Convention. Cavaignac lived to be employed in Naples first by Joseph Bonaparte and then by Murat.<sup>1</sup> Himself a Baron of the Empire, his son Louis-Eugène Cavaignac was *Chef du pouvoir exécutif* in 1848 under the Second Republic, and was a competitor of Louis Bonaparte's for the Presidency.

Moncey soon found himself checked by the new Representatives, as his predecessor had been by the former men. Large reinforcements were expected from La Vendée, but until they arrived he considered himself too weak to hold so extended a position, and, following Muller's intentions, he proposed to draw back from Tolosa and to concentrate his right under San Sebastian; but just as he was about to do so Garrau, a new Representative, arrived and forbade the move on account of the discredit which would attach to the abandonment of Tolosa, the sort of argument that had brought many armies into difficulties. Fortunately the Spaniards remained quiet, and about the middle of September the reinforcements from La Vendée began arriving. Among them were some of the regiments which had formed part of the late garrison or Armée de Mayence, a fine force which the jealous patriots were now anxious to break up, but the corps sent here had been filled up from the raw levies and was but the shadow of its former self. This reinforcement was to have been 15,000 picked troops whilst Beaulac gives only fifteen battalions as arriving. This would make, say from 10,000 to 12,000 men, but it seems that the Armée de l'Ouest, whence Beaulac says these battalions came, in reality only sent some 3,000 infantry and 500 cavalry.

It is difficult to judge of Moncey's talents as a commander. He appears to have been fond of plans for surrounding the enemy, a tendency which seldom goes along with great powers of strategy, but then so much that was done was due either to

<sup>1</sup> Baron Jean-Baptiste Cavaignac de La Lande (1775-1849). See Michaud, ix. 326-9, and *Les Mémoires d'une Inconnue* (1780-1816), Paris, Plon, 1894; published anonymously by his wife.

the interference of the Representatives or of the *Comité* in Paris, to whom all plans had to be sent before operations began (the enemy being always understood as ready to wait), that it is impossible to say exactly on whom real responsibility lay for any movement. On the 16th July, when only General of division, Moncey had attempted, apparently on his own initiative, to surround a Legion of *émigrés* and some Spaniards, who held a camp on the mountain of Arquinzú, on the west of Berderis or Verderits, one of the outposts of the Spanish body in the Baztan valley. Four thousand men were used, in two columns, but the column under Digonet chose to attack too soon, not waiting until the other, under La Tour d'Auvergne, had got round in rear of the enemy. Still, the Legion had to fly in confusion, its commander the Marquis Saint-Simon being shot through the chest. Though the affair opened the Baztan valley to the later stroke, it was so small that I should not mention it except that in the first place it showed Moncey's tendency to what the Americans, in their civil war, called the 'Anaconda' policy, of surrounding the enemy, a policy often tempting and always hard to achieve. A second reason for mentioning it is that the forty-nine *émigrés* who were captured were all shot according to the orders of the Convention; the first act of the sort recorded with this army. Oddly enough Saint-Simon,<sup>1</sup> getting off now, was taken in Madrid by Napoleon, and, being French by birth, came in 1808 very near to sharing the fate which his men had met in 1794; but, though sentenced to death, he got off with imprisonment until 1814. As Commander-in-Chief Moncey tried something of the same stroke. The *Comité* disapproving of his contemplated retirement had ordered that the Spaniards should be driven from Roncesvalles, which they most unwisely continued to hold, while an advance should be made on Pamplona. Moncey drew up his own plan which, when approved by the Representatives, was sent to Paris and was duly returned. He now had sixty-four battalions and four cavalry regiments, say some 52,000 men. In his hands the plan became an attempt to surround the enemy in the Baztan valley, whilst his right merely held the Spaniards in front of them in check. Such an operation, to be fully understood, has to be studied in

<sup>1</sup> Claude-Anne, Marquis de Saint-Simon (1743-1820), Bouillet, *Biog. Univ.*, lxxx. 404-5.



detail. For us it suffices that, while the French troops swept over ground where each mountain had a redoubt or an intrenched camp, and where every possible point of passage had its ditch or covered way, yet the one column (under Delaborde) which should have closed the mouth of the valley failed to get up in time, and the mass of the Spanish troops escaped. Still, the results were large: Moncey reported that he had killed some 2,000 and had taken about the same number of prisoners, with fifty guns. Besides the spoils of the field, he occupied the two foundries of Eugui and of Orbaiceta, with the great mast-store for the Spanish navy at Irati, and the contents, which might have been so useful later when Spain became an ally of France against England, were either removed to France or destroyed. The right wing had made a successful attack on the foe in its front, but the Spanish Commander-in-Chief with the forces immediately under him had remained quiescent.

Two incidents, neither pleasant, should be mentioned. The French found a monument, not a remarkable one, raised by the Spaniards in memory of the defeat of the rear-guard of Charlemagne in 778 when Roland fell. They could not leave this poor little memorial untouched, but destroyed it. A tree of Liberty was planted on the spot, and the flag of the Republic was raised amidst 'une musique touchante et guerrière', according to the sickening folly of the period. The monastery of Roncesvalles was said to have been burnt on this occasion, but to the amusement of the Spaniards the French searched either there or in the monument for the mace of Roland and the slippers which Archbishop Turpin, according to the legend, abandoned in his flight. Then in the last operations Moncey had praised the performance of Delaborde and the 'colonne infernale' which he said had marched forty-three hours out of forty-eight, and which would have reached its destination if it had not been for the blundering of its guides and the bad weather. Three years later, however, he was giving a certificate of conduct to Harispe, then Colonel, who was to command a division with credit in Suchet's army. He then wrote that his attack would have been successful and would have led to the capture of Pamplona, if it had not been for the inertia and the 'apathie plus que coupable' of Delaborde who, notwithstanding the advice and impulsion of

<sup>1</sup> Général Comte Jean Harispe (1768-1855), *Fastes*, iii. 270-4.

Harispe and of the Captain of the Guides, had wasted six hours in holding a council or war. Moncey's last version was probably correct, for he may have shrunk in 1794 from a report which would have led Delaborde to the scaffold. This term 'colonne infernale' is generally attributed to the alleged fact that it was partly composed of troops from La Vendée, where that title was used; but Moncey himself says he so called it because by itself alone it could have crushed the whole Spanish army.

By the plans which Carnot had submitted to the *Comité* the Armée des Pyrénées Orientales was only to drive the enemy from French territory, whilst 'Pyrénées Occidentales' was to act offensively: not to penetrate into the interior of Spain, but to seize Pasajes, Fuenterrabia, and San Sebastian. With this view the greater part of the siege artillery intended for Toulon, but set free by the capture of that town, had been sent on to Bayonne. Had Moncey received this siege-train he would have attacked Pamplona, but now came the action of the Representatives. Those in rear of the armies or in the interior often took on themselves to alter any of the Minister's orders of which they disapproved, and in this case they had sent the siege-train to Strasbourg. Next, the muskets meant for this army had been diverted on Lyons, and Carnot could only wail that the subsistences, in a word, everything which had been sent to this frontier had been intercepted, and the very operation that was most likely to succeed had been made at least uncertain. The pusillanimity of the governor of San Sebastian, and perhaps of that of Fuenterrabia, had enabled Moncey to capture those towns without a siege; but this is a good specimen of the random work of the Representatives. Carnot wrote on the 30th July (when Muller still commanded) in praise of this army, which, although the most deficient in supplies, almost overlooked, and with a very bad staff, had still done the most with its means and had kept its organization the most solid. The last phrase is hard to understand, for the organization had had to be built up. However, it was not the commanders whom Carnot meant to praise, but the Representatives with the army, to whose vigilance and zeal these advantages he said were principally due.

Unable to attack Pamplona, Moncey wished to draw nearer to his own supplies, as the winter was coming on and his men were suffering. The Representatives, however, refused to allow

this, and it was not till late in November that the *Comité* gave their decision in his favour. Some care was required to withdraw in presence of the enemy, and Moncey delivered a stroke to cover his movement. On the 24th November General Marbot, who held the space between Lecumberri and Olágüe, had fought a severe action, in which the Spaniards had the best on the first day and were again winning on the next, until they were taken in rear and fled. Most of the prisoners were massacred according to the decree of the Convention after the capitulation of Collioure. Then on the 25th November Frègeville was sent from Tolosa to make one of Moncey's favourite encircling operations on the enemy at Vergara, on the main road from France to Vitoria. The Spaniards were routed, but Frègeville's own column did not get to Salinas in time to cut their retreat. Finally on the 29th November Moncey fell back at night noiselessly, as the Spaniards said, and took post, his right at Tolosa, and his left on Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port, where he remained for the winter. The army had been strong, but now a pestilence fell on it, so that some 3,000 of its men died, and in the districts in rear whole villages were depopulated and famine came to finish the work.

Captain La Tour d'Auvergne took advantage of this lull in the active operations to ask for his retirement. He was now fifty-one years old and had served for thirty-three years, including five campaigns. His health had given way under the hardships he had borne and, dismissed with all compliments, he embarked in the *La Lormontaise* on the 5th February 1795 for Brest. When close to port the ship struck a rock and began to sink, and La Tour was captured by the English and was interned at Bodmin. Both at sea and on land the English plagued him about the Republican cockade which he wore and insisted on retaining. He was exchanged later on and left Bodmin on the 7th January 1796; he returned to France and lived at No. 66 Rue Basse, Passy, near Paris. In 1797 he repudiated a proposed nomination to the Directory and busied himself in literary work. We shall come across him again in 1799.

The winter of 1794-5 was passed in reorganizing the troops again. Rumours of peace were in the air, for General Servan, the former commander of the army, had appeared at Bayonne and was in frequent communication with the Spaniards. He now bore the title of Inspector-General of the army, but did not



exercise the duties of the post. In April 1795 Queen Caroline of Naples wrote to Lady Hamilton that 'the French General Monceny (sic) was paying compliments to Spanish couriers, giving them passports and compliments',<sup>1</sup> and generally, no doubt, behaving like a civilized soldier, much to the astonishment of the Neapolitan spitfire. On the 22nd October 1794 Moncey had notified to Colomera the decree of the Convention declaring war to the death against the Spaniards if they did not execute the capitulation of Collioure. He warned him that this savage order would be carried out after the return of his parlementaire, but, whilst Dugommier at the other end of the Pyrenees had asked for this decree and had refused angrily to correspond with his opponent, Moncey, telling Colomera that he must see the impossibility of communicating with him, hardly writes as if his heart was in it. Still, as we have seen, prisoners taken by the French had been executed. Meanwhile a Spanish squadron appeared on the coast, and Moncey issued an order to his army warning it not to lend faith to reports of peace. Nevertheless there had always been a strong party at the Spanish Court in favour of peace, and now Godoy was prepared to make some advances. Regular negotiations were not opened, but the French commissioner appointed to look after those of his countrymen that were prisoners in Spain was used by the reluctant La Unión to propose on the 4th November 1794 the following extraordinary terms. Spain was to recognize the Republic; France on the other hand was to give up to Spain the son and daughter of Louis XVI, and then was to establish the young Louis XVII in a kingdom composed of the French provinces nearest Spain! And Godoy thought himself astute in explaining that this new kingdom would not only act as a barrier between Spain and France, but would cause such discord amongst the French that the Revolution would be too much occupied by its internal dissensions to think any longer of attacking other thrones and seducing other nations by its doctrines. The fury of the Convention on receiving such a demand from its half-conquered enemy was expressed in language sufficiently energetic to meet with the approval of Napoleon himself in later times.

<sup>1</sup> Jeaffreson, J. C., *The Queen of Naples and Lord Nelson*, 2 vols., London, Hurst and Blackett, 1889. See vol. i, 288.

## XII

### THE FRENCH IN SPAIN

(November 1794 to August 1795)

Battle of the 'Montagne Noir' in the eastern Pyrenees. French and Spanish commanders killed. Pérignon in command. Moncey's advance in the west. Peace declared. Effect of these campaigns on the Peninsular War.

#### CONTEMPORARY EVENT

1795 21st July. Hoche's victory at Quiberon.

ALTHOUGH the campaign of 1794 was now over as far as the western theatre of the Pyrenees was concerned, on the eastern side Dugommier still had much on his hands. By his concentration in December he had deprived La Unión of his last chance of maiming the French forces, but the Spanish commander was by no means inactive and was now bent on a strange project, that of cannonading the French out of Spain by means of a series of siege works, which he was busily erecting, fort after fort, redoubt after redoubt, on their front. This manner of carrying out his plan was as extraordinary as its conception, for, instead of at once seizing the most important points close to the French, he was advancing gradually towards them, so that before he reached the point that ought to have been the very apex of his line it was seized by Augereau, who was drawing in to his left. This point was the hill called by the French the 'Montagne Noir' from its dark woods, and by the Spaniards on the contrary the 'Monte Roig' from its red rocks. When it was too late La Unión tried to take it, but was beaten off by Augereau. Still, the works which were gradually erected by the Spaniards formed a very strong position. Two hundred and fifty guns frowned from ninety-seven forts (not including slight flanking positions), defended by 46,000 men, while every means of delaying assault had been used, so that the ground in front was covered by *trous de loup* and all other obstacles. The works themselves were of great strength with deep ditches: the 'citadel' of Roure was so formidable that the Spaniards boasted it feared nothing but God alone. Also the Spaniards now had their full body of

cavalry, the arm in which they were so superior to the French, and most of which had been sent back across the frontier before the battle of Boulou. Such positions are most formidable against slow and regular attack, but they almost always absorb so many men in small detachments that they are liable to be overwhelmed in detail by a force bold enough to throw itself rapidly and continuously on work after work, unless it be met by a reserve strong enough to hold in the open field. Such a stroke Dugommier determined to deal with his two wings, while Pérignon in the centre remained in reserve with his own division and the cavalry, ready to support where required. Dugommier had 24,200 men really fit for battle, for he had called in some 3,000 from the Cerdagne, and he had also 12,500 less-trained troops in rear. On the 17th November accordingly came the first day of the battle of the Montagne Noir, or of the Lines of Figueras. On the right Augereau at dawn attacked the very positions on the Muga which he had so recently defended. His troops displayed the greatest bravery, but the Spaniards in front of him did not behave well. By 10 a.m. the whole left wing of the enemy was in full flight; but Augereau, seeing that the rest of the army was halted, drew up his men and waited for orders. Had he known it, Dugommier was dead and the army was waiting for a fresh hand to grasp the reins.

At half-past seven in the morning, while Augereau was sweeping on and while Sauret on the left was still engaged, Dugommier had drawn back a little on the Montagne Noir to breakfast in a small enclosure (in much the same way as Wellington lunched at Salamanca), taking his meal under a heavy fire; but, whilst the English commander went untouched, a shell laid Dugommier dead just when the army most wanted a leader. He had sacrificed much to make Augereau's blow more telling, and had reinforced him both from the centre and the left. Consequently Sauret on the left had to attack 10,000 Spaniards with only 4,200 men, and this too when the enemy in his front were ably led by Vives, who had covered the retreat at Boulou. Sauret was repulsed; and though his men beat off the Spanish cavalry they had to retreat. Pérignon, as we shall see, sent reinforcements and tried to restore the fight on this side by attacking the Cabrény's forts, but Sauret was hard pressed and might have been cut off when the guns of Victor were heard as he came up



from Banyuls in rear with his reserve and took two forts by Espolla. Then Vives heard of the disaster to the Spanish left and he halted on his flank, as Augereau had done on his. The moment was critical. Who was to succeed Dugommier? The Representative Delbrel was close at hand and he took on himself to decide. He would have preferred Augereau, whose brilliant bravery he knew and who had been on such good terms with the fallen commander, whilst he believed that Pérignon had not even been told the plan on which the army was acting. On the other hand Pérignon was considered to have better military knowledge than his rival and to be more suited for high command. Indeed, Augereau may have been too noisy even for this feverish army. It was unfortunate that the choice lay between two Generals who were not on good terms with one another, but there was no possible third course, and one point decided the question in favour of Pérignon. Successful as Augereau was, still he was so far from the centre that much valuable time would be lost before he could arrive and take in the situation; whilst Pérignon was close by and could at once succour the endangered left. By 8 a.m., therefore, Pérignon was in command and at first hoped to give the left an opportunity of recovering itself by attacking the Cabrény's redoubts a little to the north-east of the Montagne Noir, but eventually he saw that the check to Sauret could not be reversed, and so, ordering Augereau on the right to halt, he sent reinforcements both to the retreating Sauret and to Victor. How little he and Augereau were likely to agree was at once shown when, anxious about his centre, he wanted the troops at the Montagne Noir to be reinforced from the right, to which they belonged. Augereau replied that he knew the importance of the point, but he had not too many men and the positions he already occupied now covered it. Whilst Augereau, then, held the positions he had won, the centre and left withdrew to their original ground.

Pérignon now insisted on having two days to reconnoitre the enemy and to hold a council, and it was only on the 20th November that he delivered the second stroke of the battle of the Montagne Noir. Augereau, reinforced from the centre and left, so that he had 11,442 men, was again to deal the main blow, attacking especially the great redoubt of the Roure. Beaufort,

who had taken Pérignon's place in the centre, had 6,120 men, and Sauret on the left had now 3,442 only: still, both were to advance, and Victor with 2,036 men supported Sauret from the Col de Banyuls. Once again Augereau swept over the works in one triumphant rush. The great redoubt was taken and the troops of Augereau and of Beaufort, sending the enemy flying before them, met at the Pont de Molins where the main road crosses the Muga. The routed Spaniards were cowering under Figueras, but Pérignon thought it imprudent to push farther that day. The Spanish right under Vives had fought much better, and the weak division of Sauret was even beginning to retreat when the success of the centre and right changed the situation. Vives now fell back, followed by Sauret, while Victor on the extreme left took the Espolla redoubts; and this right wing of the Spaniards, finding that the rest of their army would not rally at Figueras, sent its artillery into Rosas, and itself marched east of Figueras to Gerona.

As Quebec had seen Montcalm and Wolfe fall on the same field, so the Montagne Noir was to see the two rival commanders die. Dugommier, as we know, had fallen on the first day. In the hour of defeat on this second day La Unión tried to turn the tide. He had rejected Morla's wise advice to call all his men out of the works, where they were being overwhelmed in detail, and to throw them on the advancing Augereau. Now he came up just in time to see the French wave rush over the great redoubt which 'feared only God'. The first assailants, as soon as they had penetrated inside, held their hands to lift their comrades in and, as they said, to present them in the ballroom. As his escort disbanded at the sight and disappeared in a cloud of dust and smoke, shots rang out from a troop of Spanish cavalry which was passing, and the French saw no more. At the end of the day the body of the unfortunate General was found, crucifix in hand, pierced by two balls. Rumour said that one of his own men had revenged a disgrace inflicted before the battle. The Spaniards asked for the body, but the French were not in a magnanimous mood. They had begun the first day's fight intending to give quarter, but some of their men were blown up in a fort they had taken, and on the second day they had sworn revenge. From 8,000 to 9,000 Spaniards were massacred and, when a Spanish General held his sword out to

General Duphot the Frenchman at once ran him through. The French also believed that the Spaniards had desecrated the grave of General Mirabel. Pérignon therefore at first refused to yield up the corpse of La Unión, and the Representative Delbrel asked the bearer of the flag of truce what they had done with the remains of Mirabel. Better counsels supervened, and the body of the unfortunate Spaniard was given over to his father, the Duke of San Carlos.

The day had been one of splendid, dramatic triumph. As the Spaniards saw the great redoubt and its works fall, they set fire to the mine they had laid, and it was amidst explosion after explosion and over smoking ruins that the advance was finished. In four hours' bayonet-fighting more than eighty works, the result of six months' labour, had been taken, and Pérignon had presided at 'the last and gigantic duel between the old school of positions and the modern school of manœuvres'. The delighted victors had their reward, for 200 guns and all the tents and baggage of the Spaniards were in their hands, as if the delay granted after Boulou had merely allowed the enemy to lay in fresh supplies to be seized in their turn. Five future Marshals were on this field. Pérignon commanded in chief; Augereau led the most important attack and gained the chief honours of the day; Victor had a brigade; Colonel Lannes was at the head of the 105th Regiment, newly formed by the brigading of the Gers Volunteers with a regular battalion. Captain Bessières was with the cavalry, who had their part in the pursuit. Most of these men were to see many other fields, but none so striking, so daring as this day's work.

Pérignon did not gather all the possible fruits of his victory, but he had more excuse than had Dugommier after Boulou. Intending to besiege Rosas, he learnt that Figueras, described by Dugommier as the strongest place in Spain, was held only by a miscellaneous crowd of fugitives from the field. He simply bullied the governor into a disgraceful surrender of the fortress, 9,107 men, 171 guns, and stores, of which he said it would take him two months to make an inventory. This unexpected success, however, did him much harm, for, believing he could get the smaller place of Rosas on equally cheap terms, he was gradually led into a siege which only terminated by a capitulation on the 3rd February 1795. Of this siege it is only necessary to say that



the place was well defended by a garrison of from 4,000 to 5,000 men, supplied from the sea by the Spanish squadron, which eventually carried them all off except a few hundred. These were caught by the vigilance of Victor, who drove off the boats sent for the last batch. Victor had indeed distinguished himself in this siege, which was carried out in the worst time of winter. On the 23rd December he and his grenadiers had captured by assault a redoubt threatening the left of the French trenches, and not only had he taken his full share of the siege works, but he had done as useful service by repairing the road between the artillery park at Palau and the little port of Selva de Mar, by which, notwithstanding incredible obstacles, he succeeded in maintaining the communications. For all this he received the most flattering praise from Pérignon. Here also Andréossi, so well known later, distinguished himself as 'l'ingénieur des procédés révolutionnaires'; and under him served Sanson, who was to command the engineers at the siege of the place by Saint-Cyr in 1808.<sup>1</sup> Augereau had been covering the siege, so most probably neither Lannes nor Bessières had any share in the cruel siege work, during which some 8,000 to 9,000 men of the new levy deserted to their homes, leaving the army reduced to some 25,000 to 26,000 combatants. Pérignon now prepared for the march on Gerona and Barcelona, which he might have carried out before with no real resistance. The Spaniards had again made overtures of peace, this time in more sensible terms, but these also were rejected, and they had once more rallied their forces to such purpose that, when the French army advanced on the 1st March to demonstrate on the Fluvia, it had to fall back discomfited. Pérignon now prepared a plan of campaign. Asking to be reinforced by 10,000 infantry and 2,000 horse, he intended to use 50,000 infantry and 4,000 cavalry, and 10,000 men were to join him from the Cerdagne. The army was to advance and throw the new Spanish commander, Urrutia, into Gerona, where it was hoped he would lay down his arms. Then the army would rase all the forts taken, and would besiege Barcelona. When Barcelona fell Catalonia would be entirely occupied. Pérignon hardly hoped to get all

<sup>1</sup> Belmas, J., *Journeaux des sièges faits ou soutenus par les Français dans la Péninsule de 1807 à 1814*, 4 vols., Paris, Firmin-Didot, 1836-7, 4to., with atlas.

he wanted, for he told the *Comité* that, 'accustomed to live by expedients, he counted on the enemy and reckoned on the Providence which watches over the safety of armies' (French armies, it is to be understood). In reply the *Comité* superseded him in the most brutal fashion.

The *Comité* had determined that the Armée des Pyrénées Occidentales alone should attack the Spaniards whilst that of the Pyrénées Orientales was to remain on the defensive. Pérignon was only commanding temporarily; and, affecting to believe the secondary role now allotted to his army might vex him, they nominated on the 3rd March Schérer, then in command of the Armée d'Italie, to replace him. The real cause was Pérignon's relations with Augereau. The Representative Delbrel, in selecting Pérignon, had perceived that friction might occur between the two rivals and, although there was no outward opposition, it was as natural that Pérignon in giving orders should be always guarding himself against undue interference with his passionate lieutenant, as that Augereau should restrict himself to the exact execution of his instructions. It was no longer as in the time of Dugommier, who trusted so much to the initiative of the commander of his right. Delbrel, suggesting that either of the two might be sent to another army, had said that the best course would probably be to send a General from another army to command-in-chief, leaving Augereau and Pérignon each to command a division. This was to count on much self-sacrifice and generosity on the part of Pérignon, especially after he had held command for more than three months and, besides winning a great battle, had presented two fortresses to the Republic. Pérignon rose to the occasion. He declared that the *Comité* was right: as a matter of principle a Commander-in-Chief should never be replaced by a General from the same army. His sentiments for the Republic remained unaltered. He would await Schérer and would give him all possible information, as if to another self. He might well have asked to withdraw, but he had heard a proposal to place him at the head of the *avant-garde*. This would displace Augereau, who had served with so much distinction there. With a little touch of pride he said he had already commanded the *avant-garde*, then the central mass of the army, then the army itself, and always with good fortune. Now the reserve would suit

him: there he would displace no one. Nothing could be more honourable than this, except, perhaps, Canrobert's insisting on serving under his late subordinate Pélissier in the Crimea.

Affairs now hung heavily, for again there were rumours of peace, but before the new commander joined there was a good deal of desultory fighting in which Pérignon hardly shone. On the 31st May Schérer at last arrived. He, too, soon had his plan of campaign, but the *Comité* would give him no reinforcements, and told him he might attack if he were sure he could beat the Spaniards and force them to peace: only one thing they prescribed, he must leave nothing to chance. Now both Napoleon and Wellington, in days when neither had known defeat, laid stress on the uncertainty of battles, and Schérer was hardly likely to fight intentionally on such a condition. However, on the 15th June he was led into a battle. He had prepared a great reconnaissance on the Fluvia to gather in what harvest of the crops he could, but Urrutia, believing he was attacked, took the commendable course of concentrating on his centre and throwing himself on the weak French centre, which gave way until Augereau, ever on the watch, came up and made the superior force of Spaniards retire. Neither side had much to boast of. Next, Schérer had the folly to begin such a line of works in the poisonous marches of the Ampurdan as La Unión had carried out on better soil. He had to abandon this idea, as his troops were ravaged by fever, which amongst the Generals employed only spared him and the strong Augereau. The army was almost in a state of dissolution, and La Cuesta was able to drive the French from the Cerdagne. The change of commanders from Pérignon seemed about to bring defeat, when on the 30th July Schérer received news that peace with Spain had been concluded at Bâle on the 22nd of that month. The French were delighted, but the Spanish officers regretted the loss of an opportunity for taking their revenge.

Meanwhile the 'Pyrénées Occidentales' had made a successful advance. In his reorganization Moncey had pushed on the *embrigadement* of the battalions, which had not been completed; two battalions of each regiment were styled the 'field battalions', and the third, formed of the weakest men, was placed in garrisons. The battalions of grenadiers, an organization abandoned in most of the other armies, but used here as a reserve



in each division, were re-formed.<sup>1</sup> As we have seen, the *Comité* intended this army to take the offensive: it was to besiege Pamplona, whilst Schérer remained on the defensive. A siege train and a bridge equipment were being formed at Bayonne, and Marescot,<sup>2</sup> who had just won divisional rank in the 'Sambre-et-Meuse' as commanding the engineers at the capture of Maestricht, came to direct the projected siege. The *Comité* had ordered 12,000 men from La Vendée to fill up the gaps in the ranks made by the pestilence. On the 9th June Moncey lost two of his Generals of Division, Frègeville and Marbot, besides other officers that the Representatives dismissed for ravages which had been committed by the troops in the recent excursion into Spain, but for which these officers really were not responsible. Marbot went to his home, but was restored to his rank a little before the 5th October 1795. Jomini includes Delaborde amongst the Generals dismissed, but Delaborde had gone to the 'Rhin-et-Moselle'.<sup>3</sup>

The reinforcements from La Vendée set free by the first but incomplete pacification of February 1795 began arriving on the 25th June, and Moncey commenced his operations. In front of him Colomera had been replaced by the Prince de Castel-Franco, who had been commanding the Army of Aragon and who retained it with that of the Armies of Navarra and Guipuzcoa. Besides their extreme right, the Spaniards, who also had been reinforced, had two corps in front of Moncey, their centre under Filanghieri at Lecumberri on the crest of the hills protecting Pamplona; and another corps under Crespo to the east of Bilbao, along the Deva or Deba river from Vergara to the sea. Each of these was about 9,000 strong.<sup>4</sup> It is by his operations against these bodies that we must judge the generalship of Moncey. Either he or the Representatives retained the mania for encircling movements, coupled by an unfortunate if necessary habit of talking about them beforehand, so that,

<sup>1</sup> In the 'Pyrénées Orientales' the grenadier battalions formed from the Chasseurs were used, not as a reserve, but rather as advanced-guard troops.

<sup>2</sup> Général Comte Armand-Samuel de Marescot (1758-1832): *Fastes*, iii. 373-6.

<sup>3</sup> *Fastes*, iii. 164. Frègeville is probably Henri, Marquis de Frègeville (1740-1803), not Charles-Louis, Marquis de Frégeville, serving in 'Pyrénées Orientales', who had been taken prisoner on the 3rd September 1793: *Fastes*, iii. 227; Chuquet, *Dugommier*, 390. Cf. p. 211.

<sup>4</sup> But apparently the Spanish militia is not included.

when the troops were about to start under professions of secrecy, a number of men and women, attracted by hopes of booty, would flock in on the evening before the departure.

Moncey's first stroke was from his right against Crespo. On the 28th June Raoul with five and a half battalions crossed the Deva near its mouth and threatened the Spanish left; then next day two other columns of five battalions each moved on the front and left of the position, while a third column under Merle from Tolosa made for Villarreal, in rear of Vergara, to cut the retreat. Crespo, however, learnt his danger, and on the 29th June he fell back by Villarreal to Salinas in the hills to the north of Vitoria and on the main road to Madrid. This was rather a concentration of the Spaniards and brought Crespo nearer in touch to Filanghieri. Next, Moncey tried for the Spanish right, strictly their centre, at Lecumberri. On the 2nd July three columns, apparently twenty-one battalions,<sup>1</sup> moved from Tolosa, and another of seven battalions marched from San Esteban on the north. On the 3rd July Lecumberri was rushed, the Tolosa columns falling on the front and flanks, while the San Esteban column took the place in rear. Everything had gone capitally, and the four attacks were delivered simultaneously at daybreak, but the enemy, abandoning their entrenchments, had retired southwards to Irúrzun to the west of Pamplona and on the road from that fortress to Vitoria, so they were still in full communication with Crespo at Salinas. This was disheartening, but Moncey struck again at Filanghieri on the 6th July:<sup>2</sup> this time he only hoped to catch the advanced guard of his enemy. Four columns, thirteen battalions, closed in on the strong and entrenched position held by the enemy, the right sweeping in by the Vitoria road. Once again the enemy withdrew, but this time they turned in the plain and struck back with effect. Eventually, however, they retired on the left bank of the Arga river, on which Pamplona stands; and the French now held Irúrzun and so cut the road by Salvatierra to Vitoria. Although his prey had slipped through his fingers, Moncey at last held the direct communication between Filanghieri and Crespo and he now turned cheerfully to a fresh project for catching Crespo on his right. The troops

<sup>1</sup> Supposing that Willot had ten battalions, but perhaps he had only five.

<sup>2</sup> Reading Messidor for Thermidor: Beaulac, 166.

on the Deva were reinforced to 4,500 men under the Chief of the Staff, General Dessein, who on the 12th July marched from Elgoibar, taking only two very light guns, to cross the mountains for Durango, on the road from Bilbao to Vitoria. On the way he met and threw back Crespo's left, taking thirteen guns, and by night he reached Durango; here he found twelve more guns and all the supplies of the Spanish left, which were destroyed. Then, moving on southwards by Villarreal, on the 14th July he reached the hills above Vitoria, into which his advanced guard penetrated. Next day he himself entered Vitoria. Meanwhile Moncey, leaving a force to watch Pamplona and Filanghieri's corps, had sent Willot on the 13th July to march by Salvatierra (the road along which the French in 1813 were to retreat from Vitoria) to gain Crespo's rear at Vitoria. Willot had 3,500 men, and on the 15th July he reached Salinas, where he expected to find the enemy. Crespo now seemed fairly caught, but in such plans there is almost always one fatal weakness. When you have swept round to the rear of the enemy, as Dessein and Willot had done, you seldom have enough troops to guard the roads by which you yourself have come. If the enemy lose their heads and rush for the rear, they are fairly caught like rabbits in a net. But, if the General of the enemy be a clear and cool-headed man, whilst you are busy in his rear closing the last gaps, he has only to move to his front and escape across *your* rear. How nearly this might have been done at Ulm in 1805 the student should know, and such a march might have saved the garrison of Metz in 1870. Crespo wisely reconnoitred both roads, that to Vitoria in his rear and that to Bilbao by Mondragon on his left front. The Vitoria road was held by the French, but no one was on the Bilbao road, across which Dessein had marched. Leaving the two French columns to make their triumphant junction behind him, Crespo calmly struck north to Bilbao by Durango, so that Moncey once more drew his net empty to land. Even the Spaniards might have felt some sympathy with him, for it really had been, as far as his strength allowed, a very well-arranged plan.

Next came a curious move. Dessein and Willot, joining forces, marched across the hills by Orduna for Bilbao, which they entered on the 19th July without resistance, for Crespo, reduced by desertion to less than seven thousand men, had doubled



back on their left and, moving by the mountains, reached the strong defile of Pancorbo. Here he was back again blocking the main road from Vitoria by Miranda to Burgos. On the 22nd July Moncey sent a brigade across the Ebro to occupy Miranda, but the Spaniards drove it out again the same evening. The troops sent to Bilbao were now brought back and were sent to hold Miranda. Moncey apparently intended here only to make it appear as if he meant to cross the Ebro in force, whilst in reality he concentrated at Puente-la-Reina, south of Pamplona, in order to cover the siege of that fortress. He was not to be put to such painful proof as a siege almost always entails, for on the evening of the 5th August came the news, already received by Schérer, that peace with Spain had been signed. The appearance of Moncey's troops at Miranda was thought by some at the time to have had an important bearing on the conclusion of peace. But Godoy points out that peace was signed at Bâle on the 22nd July, whilst Moncey's leading troops, Miollis' brigade,<sup>1</sup> did not reach the Ebro till the 24th. As a matter of fact it was the 22nd when Miollis crossed the river, but the probability of such a movement must have been apparent long enough before to hurry the negotiations, even at Bâle.

These operations of the *Armée des Pyrénées Occidentales* should be compared with those carried out by the sister army in the summer of 1794. Nothing is more curious than the quiescent attitude of the Spaniards in this western district: they received blows, but delivered hardly any, whilst in the east they struck again and again. Also, whilst here the French were bent, time after time, on encircling their enemy, on the east it was the Spaniards that tried to throw their noose over Augereau. In the west the Spaniards tried to elude the encircling columns, and when they did stand at bay for a moment on the 5th July it was not till the French columns had passed the critical moment and had met. In the eastern Pyrenees, on the contrary, Augereau, not placed so strongly as the Spaniards in the west, had met the columns that swarmed round him with Rivoli tactics, striking right and left before he could be overwhelmed. It is not so easy to know the relative strength of the two sides in the west as in the east, but apparently on the 2nd July 1795 Moncey used from 11,500 to 14,000 men against Crespo, who probably had

<sup>1</sup> Not, I think, the well-known General.

9,000;<sup>1</sup> and on the 6th July he used some 16,500 against Filanghieri, who had about the same strength as Crespo. Now on the 19th May 1794 Augereau with some 6,000 men beat off 15,000 Spaniards dispersed in seven columns, and on the 13th August he again triumphed with 9,000 over 22,000 Spaniards in six columns. Considering how far apart some of Moncey's columns started from one another, there would seem to have been room for strokes at them before they could unite, and this too in the enemy's country, where the French suffered from want of information. Crespo at Salinas may have been hampered by having to guard his supplies, but he had 9,000 men to deal with two columns, one 4,500 and the other only 3,500 strong. Had he crushed the smaller column under Willot, he might then have dealt with the other, or at worst have joined Filanghieri. This is a point for tacticians to consider, but it seems safe to say that Moncey's strokes were not well met by the Spanish Generals. Still, the way in which Moncey threw his weight in succession on the two separated Spanish corps was good and, if his conduct be compared with that of Pichegru on the Rhine at this time, it will be seen how much more use he made of his opportunities than the better known, or rather, the more praised General. As for his failures in his encircling plans it must be remembered that, as Saint-Cyr was to find with astonishment in 1808, the Spaniards were most rapid marchers. In the next place the French might have learnt the lesson brought home to them later on in the Spanish war of the Empire, namely, how difficult it was for them to make any surprise movement in a country where the people were disaffected towards them. A single peasant, especially amongst the mountains, might ruin the best-planned enterprise. However, Moncey's strokes cannot be called entire failures, for in most cases they resulted in the seizure of important positions. The escape of Crespo from Salinas, it should be observed, was only achieved by that commander's abandoning his supplies and separating himself entirely from the rest of the army to which he belonged. One thing was ominous, if only it had been remarked: already Spanish volunteers had appeared in the field bearing a banner on which Our Lady was depicted, and they advanced singing litanies, headed by a priest in full vestments.

<sup>1</sup> Taking each battalion at 500 : Beaulac, 199.

Jomini is rather inclined to shake his sagacious head when he thinks of what might have been the course of the campaign had war continued, and Godoy professes that the Spaniards, concentrating while Moncey was engaged against Pamplona, were about to attack his right on the Bidasoa. It would have been most interesting to watch such a campaign, for Moncey would of course have flown back from Pamplona, and then what an opening he would have had for one of his encircling operations! Such a stroke was too obvious not to have been foreseen by him: indeed, Godoy acknowledges that he was already strengthening his right on the Bidasoa with field works. There seems no reason for supposing that he would not have been equal to the task of covering the siege of Pamplona. By the way, it is difficult to understand Godoy's nomenclature of the parts of the Spanish army, and I follow Jomini in calling Crespo its left, Filanghieri its centre, and the force on the east (facing Moncey's valley division) its right. Moncey's real difficulty, had the campaign continued, would have been the want of supplies. In his interesting account of the way in which the army was fed, or not fed, Beaulac, an eye-witness, comes to the conclusion that, had peace not been made, famine alone would have forced the army to fall back to the frontier. What was worse was that not only the districts that should have fed the army were stripped of supplies, but that, when Moncey sent officers to complain to the *Comité* at Paris, he was assured privately by Lamarque, one of his emissaries, that the supplies were deficient everywhere, and the *Comité* did not know where to get any. 'Peace,' said Lamarque, 'is needed, and it is probable that they will make it.' This was on the 11th April 1795, and we find Tallien, one of the members of the *Comité* who had met Lamarque, charging Bourgoing, the Minister, to assure Godoy that, if he wished for peace, the exaltation of certain persons would not hinder it, all burdensome conditions would be set aside, and the moment was favourable. On the 10th May full powers to treat were given to Barthélemy, who finally concluded the peace. Thus the French Government was obviously not hoping for any great success.

The action of the Representatives with 'Pyrénées Occidentales' does not seem to have been so violent or so troublesome as with some other armies, including the sister force. Moncey



was more fortunate than Muller in his dealings with these men: he was indeed their man, and when he rushed the valley of Baztan in July 1794 two of them, Pinet and Cavaignac, were with the heads of his columns. When this was the case the General so honoured was often promoted if successful, or guillotined if beaten; and it is much to the credit of the Representatives with this army that none of the commanders went to the scaffold. On the other hand we find them interfering with Moncey's plans and, even after Moncey had ceased to command, he was complaining of the manner in which one of them, Auguis, was receiving charges against him. In their main duty, that of obtaining supplies, they failed completely, as we have just seen.

Peace once made, 'Pyrénées Occidentales' soon disappeared into space. On the 17th August the troops began their march for Bayonne, whence part went to the East, but, as the *Armée des Pyrénées Orientales* was also broken up and as most of it was on the way to Italy, these regiments must have either gone on to Italy also, or have been used for garrisons in the South. The whole marching strength was 25,000, and of these 10,955, formed in two divisions under Willot and Dessein, went to join the *Armée de l'Ouest* in La Vendée.<sup>1</sup> As in the case of the sister army, these troops, passing through the districts whence they had been recruited, lost heavily by desertion, and when Willot arrived at Fontenay on the 1st October the draft had sunk to 4,000.

Hoche did not at all like the share which fell to him and, writing to Grouchy, he said: 'The army of the Pyrenees is neither brilliant nor disciplined. General Latour, who comes from it, is an infamous scoundrel; Raoul is worthless; what a cursed lot!' These Generals did not last long under Hoche, for Raoul was suspended for not stopping pillage, and Latour for bad conduct. This is curious, as Beaulac claims great praise for the army for its conduct towards the inhabitants of the country they fought over: the garrison of San Sebastian, for instance, half starved in the midst of plenty, apparently looked with longing eyes at the 'loaves of white bread of the greatest beauty', exhibited each day on the market-places and in the shops. Even Dessein himself, however, reported that the army was not well disciplined

<sup>1</sup> But generally, by anticipation, they are said to have joined the *Armée des Côtes de l'Océan*.

and La Vendée soon ruined order in most troops. Moncey also ought to have gone to La Vendée. On the 25th August the *Comité*, writing in flattering terms, nominated him to command the army for which his troops were bound, the Armée de l'Ouest, the most important force in La Vendée. Had he accepted, and succeeded in the difficult task of subduing the country, he would have stood in the way of the rise of Hoche, as he would have been the principal figure in the West. He, however, objected on the ground of ill-health, and asked instead to be permitted to go to Bagnères<sup>1</sup> to recover. In reality, like many honourable officers, he disliked the sort of war against insurgents and, unfortunately in the end for himself, he was heard to say: 'It is very cruel to have to fight against Frenchmen who are defending their opinions.' Creditable as such a sentiment was, it showed he was not at the height of the true patriotism of the time, when only Republicans of the best type were entitled to have opinions. Hoche proved himself an adept in La Vendée at work for which Moncey was in all probability utterly unsuited, and Dessein, writing to his former chief in the most affectionate manner, assured him that he could not have served the public cause there with all the advantage he would have desired: 'Your extreme sensibility and your physical forces would not have permitted you.' Indeed Moncey, with much service behind him, was now forty-one, and Hoche, who had not been under so long a strain, was but twenty-seven. As Moncey again put forward his health as an obstacle the *Comité* sent Hoche to the Armée de l'Ouest, on the 1st September, and nominated Moncey to command the smaller Armée des Côtes de Brest in Hoche's place. But Moncey still protested and asked for a local command, that of the 11th Military Division at Bayonne. The *Comité* at last yielded to his wish and on the 15th September gave him the appointment he wanted.

As for the officers of his late army, it is true that several of them were well known in later wars and under the Empire, for instance, Digonet, Miollis<sup>2</sup> (if this really be the man distinguished later), Merle,<sup>3</sup> and Lamarque, who in 1814 was to describe the

<sup>1</sup> In Hautes-Pyrénées.

<sup>2</sup> Général Comte Charles-François de Miollis (1759-1828); *Fastes*, iii. treats him, but not clearly, as with 'Italie'.

<sup>3</sup> Général Baron Jean-Joseph Merle (born 1770, died at Valladolid, 1811): *Fastes*, iii. 394-5; see Braquehay.

First Restoration as 'a halt in the mud', who fought against the Vendéans in 1815 and, taking to politics under Louis Philippe, played a great part in the Chamber, and whose funeral in Paris in 1832 caused a bloody struggle in the streets.<sup>1</sup> Another General who came to the front here was Harispe,<sup>2</sup> who was to become Moncey's Chief-of-the-Staff with the 3rd Corps in Spain in 1808. One of Suchet's divisional Generals, he was sent to Soult's army in 1814 and fought against the English. He was captured at Toulouse, and Wellington announced to the English army the news that the General had recovered from his wounds. It is strange that Castelvvert, a General of brigade, who stood high in character here,<sup>3</sup> played so bad a part in the Armée du Nord in 1796.<sup>4</sup> The Spaniards declared they had routed him in the operations in October 1794. It is, however, when we come to the senior Generals that we see how little mark they made later. Moncey, taking only a small part in the descent into Italy in 1800, did not appear again in the field until he returned to Spain in 1808. After rather unsatisfactory operations against Zaragoza he left and was not employed in war again until he re-entered Spain with the army of the Duc d'Angoulême, in favour with the Bourbons against whom he had fought in 1808 and 1809. Chance sent him both in 1808 and 1823 to enter by the western Pyrenees. Dessein, who had worked his way up from the ranks in the regiment in which La Tour d'Auvergne served, was soon invalided in La Vendée and did not re-appear on the field.<sup>5</sup> Marbot entered the *Conseil des Anciens*, commanded at Paris for a time but, refusing to join in the preparations for Brumaire, was removed, and we shall find him dying in the Armée d'Italie of 1800. Frègeville went to La Vendée and in 1798 entered the conseil des *Cinq-Cent*, where he is said to have worked against Moncey. He served later under the Consulate, but did little.<sup>6</sup> Willot came into collision with Hoche in La Vendée. Then he was given the command at Marseilles;

<sup>1</sup> Général Baron Jean-Maximilien Lamarque (1770-1832): *Fastes*, iii. 308-11.

<sup>2</sup> Général Baron Jean Harispe (1768-1855); *Fastes*, iii. 270-4. Oman, vii. 204.

<sup>3</sup> Beaulac, 76, 'officier vigilant, plein de franchise et d'honneur'.

<sup>4</sup> Phipps, ii. 361-3.

<sup>5</sup> Général Bernard Dessein (1762-died after 1815): Chassin, *Pac.*, ii. 154 note.

<sup>6</sup> I think this is Henri, Marquis de Frègeville (1740-1803), not Charles-Louis, Marquis de Frègeville, who served in 'Pyrénées Orientales', see Michaud, lxiv. 493, reading Occidentales for Orientales, and Chuquet, *Dugommier*, 390, note 1, but I may have confused the brothers. cf. p. 203.



there, trying to be impartial and acting 'like an angel', he gave offence to the Jacobins and managed to annoy Bonaparte, who got him removed. Like Frègeville he entered the *Conseil des Cinq-Cent*. Joining, or forced into, the Royalist party, he was deported at Fructidor and he did not return to France until the Restoration.<sup>1</sup> Lespinasse, who commanded the artillery and had done well, went to Italy, where also he commanded his arm with distinction under Bonaparte. He would have risen, but he was old and was retired by being nominated to the Senate.<sup>2</sup> Delaborde is the only General of Division of this army who had a long career before him. He went to the 'Rhin-et-Moselle', and after several commands led a division under Junot into Portugal, where he fought at Roliça against Wellington. Later he served under Soult at Oporto. He served in the Russian campaign, and was one of Napoleon's Peers in 1815.<sup>3</sup> Mauco I cannot trace,<sup>4</sup> but it will be seen that the list is not a brilliant one.

The French naturally gained much knowledge in these campaigns which must have come in usefully later. Moncey, for instance, when he stood on the Ebro with King Joseph in 1808, must have been acquainted with the country at his back. On the 3rd July 1813 Marshal Jourdan, then Major-General to King Joseph, asks him for the loan of a map which, he said, the Commissioner of Police had given to the King and on which all the former positions of the French were shown. Then on the 13th July of the same year we find Wellington reading the report of these campaigns in the western Pyrenees, and seeing there was a good road from Fuenterrabia to Pasajes.<sup>5</sup>

The Armée des Pyrénées Orientales also was broken up. Its strength on the 21st July 1795 was 36,491. Of these troops, fifty-one weak battalions (some 12,000 men) were left in the 9th and 10th Military Divisions in the South as a garrison, a necessary precaution, as we shall see. Fifty-three other battalions (say less than 15,000 men) were to go to the Armée

<sup>1</sup> Général Amédée Willot (1757-1823): Michaud, i, 596-601.

<sup>2</sup> Général Comte Augustin Lespinasse (1737-1816): Michaud, lxxi. 380-2.

<sup>3</sup> Général Comte Henri-François Delaborde (1764-1833): *Fastes*, iii. 164-5.

<sup>4</sup> Possibly Général Jean-Baptiste Mauco, who commanded the 4th battalion of the volunteers 'Basses-Pyrénées', and was promoted General of Division in June 1794. He was retired in September 1803.

<sup>5</sup> Wellington, *Dispatches*, vi. 606-7.

d'Italie with Schérer, who on the 31st August had been nominated to replace Kellermann at the head of 'Italie'. The immediate reinforcement of 'Italie' by this means was, however, small. Most of the volunteer battalions forming the army came from the neighbouring provinces, and many of the officers and men believed, or professed to believe, that their service ended with the war against Spain. They went off to their homes, so that the battalions destined for 'Italie' started very weak and lost more men as they went on. The whole South was in confusion. The downfall, first of Robespierre and then of the Jacobins, had raised the hopes of the Royalists, who had formed the 'Compagnons de Jéhu' or 'Compagnies du Jéhu', or Jésus, du Roi and du Soleil, and these bodies, to the horror of the Patriots, paid them back their many deeds of violence and oppression. Too generally the Patriots had found nothing but the most lamblike submission, and they were as bewildered as they were angry at the reversion of the roles. One member of the Convention, Baudot, declared that these bands had massacred more Republicans than had fallen fighting against the Vendéans.

Of the five men that the Armée des Pyrénées Orientales gave to the Marshalate, at least two had finished their military education before they left it, for both Pérignon and Augereau had not only become Generals of Division, but had had good experience in that position. Pérignon, indeed, was one of the four Marshals (Jourdan, Kellermann, Moncey, and Pérignon) who had won victories in the field before their Imperial master was known to fame. If he had not made full use of his victory, still he had done much better than the man who superseded him, and, had he been allowed to remain at the head of the army and to push forward, he would at least have seen Barcelona. It was perhaps some disgust at his treatment that made him now choose to go to Madrid as Ambassador, instead of following Schérer to Italy. If he had gone there he would probably have mounted with the Bonapartist tide; but, as it was, his only future service in the field was to be in the disastrous campaign of 1799. We have noted in Chapter III the negotiations that failed to bring him, after the conclusion of peace with Spain, to La Vendée. Augereau had jolly justified the rapid promotion which had fallen to him. Active, bold, and at this stage of his

life self-reliant, he had shown himself fit to be the lieutenant of a daring commander, and his actions on the Muga would seem to fit him for Rivoli more than for Castiglione. It was not on the battlefield, but in the pursuit, that he had much to learn from Bonaparte, and it is only by remembering his sweeping rush on the two days of the Montagne Noir that one can understand his openly expressed resentment at his defeat at Eylau. One of those men that brag, boast, and perform, he promised to go far. The prospect for Victor also was fair, though he was still only General of Brigade; Pérignon had described him as possessing great talents and as uniting in himself all the qualities that could be desired for a General. Lannes too had distinguished himself. Lamer, the Chief of the Staff and a good officer, said that since the commencement of the war he had given proofs of great valour and shown how the most intrepid and the most wisely combined actions can be carried out. 'All that can be said of him', wrote Lamer, 'is infinitely below what he deserves.' Bessières, being in the cavalry, had had much less opportunity of coming to the front, yet his name was known, though he was only a Captain. All these three went with Schérer to the Armée d'Italie, where they met Generals of Division Masséna and Sérurier, and where Augereau at once led the right wing, with Victor's brigade and Lannes' regiment under him. In one way these men, and almost certainly Augereau, may have been prepared to think well of Bonaparte as a commander, for Dugommier had often spoken in praise of him; but they probably considered him merely as a good maker of plans—plans with the execution of which they charged themselves. There were many other officers in 'Pyrénées Orientales' that were to be well known later; Andréossi, who was to be sent as Minister to England by Napoleon in December 1803; Bon, who was to be mortally wounded before Acre; Dugua who was to lead a division in Egypt; Verdier and Destaing who both also served in Egypt and quarrelled, with the result that Destaing fell in a duel with Verdier near Paris; Compans, who was to lead one of the fine divisions of Davout; Dessaix (not to be confused with the more celebrated Desaix); and Lemoine; with Despinoy, Duphot, Guieu, Menard, Sauret, Pelleport, whose memoirs I have used, and Pelletier, all to be known in Italy; also Clauzel, who was Pérignon's favourite A.D.C.: indeed, when Pérignon



was ordered to La Vendée he made special request to be permitted to take Clauzel with him, and he did take him with his embassy to Madrid. There Clauzel acquired great influence over him and an ill-natured civilian member of the embassy declared that 'Clauzel, très joli, pense a négocier nos intérêts républicains par le canal féminin'.<sup>1</sup> Clauzel was to see a good deal of the north of Spain under Napoleon.

If we find amongst the French officers who served in this war many who were to enter Spain again, so amongst the Spanish leaders were men whose names were to occur again when Napoleon launched his armies into Spain in 1808. La Cuesta, for instance, not now old and stiff as when at Talavera he would not leave his coach and mount except on the field of battle; he had led the attack which swept the French from Collioure and the coast forts with skill and vigour, and had ended his part of the war by clearing them from the Cerdagne with promptitude. Romana had fought against both the French armies of the Pyrénées and had shown the bravery for which he was known, but, as Wellington was to complain, had learnt nothing about troops. Filanghieri, who had slipped from Moncey's toils, was Captain-General of Galicia in 1808, and Solano, who had been one of the Generals of La Unión, commanded at Cadiz. Morla was Captain-General of Andalusia and bombarded and captured the French fleet in Cadiz, himself falling into Napoleon's hands at Madrid. At first sight it might be supposed that the results of this war had something to do with the disinclination of some Spanish officers to embark in war against Napoleon in 1808: La Cuesta, for instance, held back until the mob had got a rope round his neck to hang him with, and Solano was actually murdered by the people of Cadiz while he was trying to persuade them that the English, not the French, were the real enemy. Dislike and distrust of the mob were, however, the main causes of this feeling, and the Spanish officers seem to have had no fear of meeting the French in the field. The sight of Napoleon's raw conscripts in 1808 must have reminded them of the men they had routed so easily in 1793, and to them the war had not been so disastrous as my account may have made it look. On the West they believed they had brought Moncey to a halt, whilst on the

<sup>1</sup> Dry, *Soldats ambassadeurs sous le Directoire (An iv–An viii)*, 2 vols., Paris, Plon, 1906. See vol. i, 103, 115, 170.

East not only did they hold Schérer, but their irruption into the Cerdagne gave prospects of recovering all the ground they had lost. After all they believed, as Godoy puts it, that they had done far better than the Austrians and Prussians, whom the French had swept out of the Netherlands and over the Rhine. Nor did the French at first hold them so cheap: Moncey was more cautious in his advance into the South than Dupont, who knew nothing of his enemy; and both Moncey and Bessières were almost timid when on the Ebro with King Joseph, so that Ney, who had never served in Spain before, had to be used for any 'stroke'. Napoleon had men round him who knew all about these early campaigns, Moncey and Bessières amongst others; and obviously he himself had studied their history. When Morla met him to treat for the capitulation of Madrid, he attacked him for his conduct when the Spanish army had entered the Roussillon in 1793, alleging that Morla had distributed the women amongst his soldiers.<sup>1</sup> It is true that Napoleon seems to have anticipated little military resistance, but it is forgotten that he believed he could get the mass of the Spanish army out of the country before his designs were understood, a point of which I treat in the account of 1808. It is also true that the whole Spanish enterprise grew out of his belief that the Spanish army, if hostile, would be a great danger in his rear.

<sup>1</sup> Michaud, lxxiv. 406.

## XIII

### THE PLAN OF 1794

(November 1793 to May 1795)

Dumas with 'Alpes' and Dumerbion with 'Italie' capture the crest-line. Masséna's successes. Bonaparte's responsibility for the plan. Effect of Thermidor on the operations. Dego and Vago occupied by 'Italie'.

#### CONTEMPORARY EVENTS

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|------|--|
| 1794 | 18th May. Battle of Tourcoing.               |
|      | 1st June. Lord Howe's victory at sea.        |
|      | 26th June. Battle of Fleurus.                |
|      | 10th July. French enter Brussels.            |
|      | 27th July. End of the Terror.                |
| 1795 | 20th January. French occupy Amsterdam.       |
|      | 20th April. First pacification of La Vendée. |

WE now return to the Armée des Alpes and the Armée d'Italie, which we left at the beginning of the year 1794 in possession of the revolted cities, Lyons, Marseilles, and Toulon, and holding much the same line through the Alps to the sea as they had held in 1793. The Little Saint-Bernard and Mont Cenis remained in the enemy's hands, but the Faucigny, the Tarentaise, and the Maurienne had been cleared. Farther south the front ran by Mont Genève and Monte Viso to the Camp de Tournoux and to Isola, the southernmost point of the line held by the Armée des Alpes. The Armée d'Italie held from here to the sea, including Utelle, on the right bank of the river Vésubie and Nice.

It will be remembered that Carteaux, removed from the command of the army besieging Toulon, had been appointed to that of 'Italie' and had started on the 6th November 1793. Hardly had he reached Nice when he resigned his post, but was immediately given command of 'Alpes', and on the 23rd November he was at Grenoble. Patriot as he was in action and speech, with some credit for his march on Marseilles and Toulon, and inefficient enough to make himself dear to every Republican heart, he yet gave offence by entering Grenoble with too much state. He had Hussars in front, Hussars in rear, while A.D.C.



and Adjutants-General caracoled on either side. 'I do not find in this the majestic simplicity of *sans-culottisme*', complained Chépy, who could not pardon any spectacle except when he himself was the principal figure, with hand extended, swearing some oath—Carteaux, however, was taken as a victor, and this improper pomp was put down to the adulation of the garrison, who perhaps still thought a General superior to a Representative, but it was suspicious that, when the Commander-in-Chief walked out, he was surrounded by a number of officers wearing epaulettes, while his own staff not merely had epaulettes, but even fine cloth. It was true that the General's A.D.C. did not *tutoyer* him, which surely was well, but then his wife spoke of 'perhaps moving our head-quarters' which certainly was wrong. Also, with natural inconsistency, Carteaux, whilst issuing an order sending women away from the camps, kept his own wife, who indeed before Toulon had signed orders to the army. Here she came into the office, read the dispatches, supervised the clerks, was present when her husband received officers, replied for him, and altogether acted as a military Mrs. Proudie.

Carteaux lost his command in as curious a manner as he had obtained it. He arrested the President of a court-martial which had acquitted an officer. The President thereupon blew out his own brains. Then (unless there is a confusion between the two acts) Carteaux cashiered and arrested the members of the court-martial which had acquitted the unfortunate Camillo Rossi, although that did not save this General. The patriots had applauded Carteaux's nomination: at last, they thought, the command had passed into plebeian hands, which, devoted to arts and sciences before the Revolution (he had been a painter) had only turned to the art of war to defend that cause. Now he was disliked, and on the 16th December the *Comité* directed him to be cashiered and to be sent to Paris to answer for numerous abuses of power. On the 22nd December the seals were placed on his papers, when, horrible to say, amongst the effects of his A.D.C., Amans, who shared his fate, was found a gorget with the English arms on it. That this was natural enough in the case of an officer who had been employed before Toulon did not occur to the patriots. Imprisoned in the Conciergerie in Paris, Carteaux was not released until the 5th August 1794 after Thermidor. He was employed again under the

Republic, even commanding at Lyons in January 1796. Under the Consulate he commanded at Liège, and in 1803 had the command and the civil administration of the Principality of Piombino. Napoleon, who bore him no grudge, gave him a pension on the 5th August 1810, and he died at Paris 12th April 1813. Nothing is more strange in his career than the fact that by his blunders at Toulon he had given Bonaparte his first chance of distinction. After Carteaux's disgrace the senior General, Pellapra,<sup>1</sup> took temporary command on the 22nd December. He was an officer of the old army; under the Monarchy he had won a commission in the field, and in 1793 he had run up from Lieut.-Colonel to General of Division. Ill and worn, he had the good sense to declare himself unfit for the command, saying that he had forty years' service, twelve campaigns, and had been wounded. He was probably delighted when on the 21st January 1794 he was able to hand over the army to the newly appointed commander, General Alexandre Dumas.

With the arrival of the mulatto General, father of the greater Alexandre, we step, not as one might imagine, into the realms of fiction, but into the record of honest and sensible work, very valuable after the days of such creatures as Doppet and Carteaux. Too humane for the Representatives with the Armée des Pyrénées Orientales, who had prevented him taking up his command there, he had gone to La Vendée with a reinforcement of 10,000 men, but hardly had he arrived than he learnt that the *Comité* on the 22nd December 1793 had given him the command of the Armée des Alpes, whither he proceeded.<sup>2</sup> Acting with a sensible Representative, Gaston, he set to work to organize the army properly, for much had been neglected and the troops, badly supplied, were in a state of insubordination. The *amalgame* was urged on, and the numerous corps were reduced to twenty-eight battalions, not counting twelve of the new levy, to temper whom there were not enough regular troops. The army had been drained in every way, its siege train had been used against Lyons and had gone on to Toulon, while the troops had been sent to 'Italie', Toulon, and to 'Pyrénées

<sup>1</sup> Général Jean-Louis Pellapra (1739-98): Chépy, 356 note 1, 375-6, 382; Jung, *Bonaparte*, ii. 348, 373, 380, 409; Krebs-Moris, ii. 78 note 2.

<sup>2</sup> See D'Hauterive, *Le général Alexandre Dumas* (2nd edition), Paris, Ollendorff, 1894.

Orientales'. On the 20th April 1794, with a nominal strength of 45,405, the army really had only 39,452 men for service. As for Dumas himself, his orders show that a soldier was now at the head of the army. Carteaux's staff had shone in gold and silver, but Dumas called on them and on all officers to substitute cotton on their stripes and epaulettes, and to bring in the precious metals to be offered to the Convention. While the mass of the army was in misery, the ordinary display of rich uniforms was resented, and cotton was so much the rule in the armies of the Republic that we shall find Desaix surprised when he saw in 1797 the Armée d'Italie, under Bonaparte, the only rich force, displaying all its bravery of gold and silver. What was an act of real daring was the General's conduct towards the Republican Club of Chambéry, for, hearing that he had been denounced there, Dumas not only called for the name of his calumniators, but actually informed them that an enlightened body ought to know that Generals neither could nor ought to make public the plans for their operations; they themselves alone were entrusted with the plans, and their heads answered for them. This was bold language during the Terror, when a commander was always assumed by the Clubs to be a fool and suspected of being a traitor. The women, who still hung about the army, were this time got rid of, a measure which probably gave much offence.

Turning now to the Armée d'Italie, we recall that we left Masséna, after the siege of Toulon, commanding the garrison of that place, Bonaparte, with his A.D.C. Junot and Marmont, carrying out an inspection of the coast, and Suchet with his volunteer battalion, which seems to have remained at first at Toulon, for I cannot trace it with 'Italie' for some time. Since the 8th August 1793 Dumerbion had been exercising the temporary command of the army, except for the period of Carteaux's short appearance at Nice, after which Dugommier remained the nominal commander. After the siege, however, Dugommier's appointment to 'Pyrénées Orientales' left the command of 'Italie' again vacant, and the Representatives before Toulon on the 2nd January 1794, 'considering the *civisme*, zeal, and bravery of General Dumerbion', decreed that he was temporarily to succeed to that post. On the same date the Representatives, saying that it was necessary that Dumerbion should have under his orders a General of Division fit to respond to the public



confidence, chose Masséna as the man and ordered him to join 'Italie' as soon as relieved, which he did on the 15th January, bringing with him from 8,000 to 9,000 men, so that the army was soon ready to act. Probably Dumerbion had asked for him.

Dumerbion himself was so gouty and infirm that he could hardly leave his head-quarters, but he was not replaced, because the Representatives with the army, the younger Robespierre, Salicetti, and Ricord, not only considered themselves, as civilians always do, quite competent to command the army, but also had great confidence in the abilities of the young Bonaparte, now General of Brigade, who on the 1st April arrived at Nice from his survey of the coast batteries, to command the artillery of 'Italie'. Salicetti, another Corsican, was his supporter, and Augustin Robespierre soon became his friend. An alliance with a Robespierre sounds ominous, but it was the vigour of Bonaparte and the wisdom of his plans, not his professed attachment to the Revolutionary party, that linked the two, and Augustin Robespierre really was both moderate and sensible as compared with most of his class at the time. Certainly he and the other Representatives did not attempt to upset the army, and consequently the state of affairs here compared most favourably with that, for instance, at the sister army, 'Alpes'. Bonaparte was of course too young and too junior to be placed in command of 'Italie', and Masséna probably was considered too independent. But with all his infirmities, Dumerbion had one valuable quality, he would listen to good advice, which Bonaparte was ready to give and the Representatives to support. There were now only two Generals of Division, Masséna and Macquard, with the army, except for the Chief of the Staff, Kervéguen, and Masséna, active and daring, was considered the fighting commander. Sérurier was still only General of Brigade and had just been denounced again as a *noble*, as listening complacently to the most aristocratic songs, and as watching immense desertions serenely; but even the Minister, Bouchotte, and the Representatives disbelieved in these accusations. Consequently the army, as far as we are concerned, was managed by a sort of committee in which Bonaparte advised, the Representatives decided, Dumerbion gave the orders, and Masséna carried them out. With Bonaparte were Captain

Marmont and Lieut. Junot ; Joubert apparently was a Lieutenant in a volunteer battalion, the 3rd Ain, which I cannot trace.

The amalgamation of the volunteers with the regulars was being pressed on in this army, with the usual result of making the force more homogeneous ; and most of the work was completed during 1794, although some stray battalions were left untouched. For instance, the volunteer battalion, the 4th Ardèche, of which Suchet was Lieut.-Colonel, remained separate until 17th March 1796, when, with other corps, it formed the 211th Regiment, this body again being amalgamated with others in June 1796 to form the 18th Regiment, in which the future Marshal was to serve during the Italian campaigns of Bonaparte. Meantime the battalion would seem either to have been left at Toulon, or in rear elsewhere, for it is not given in any detail of the army during 1794. The army itself, at the beginning of the campaign of 1794, was some 50,000 strong, and was opposed only by from 5,000 to 6,000 Piedmontese troops, and about 1,000 militia.

The first plan for the campaign of 1794 was for an expedition by sea on Oneglia, for which a body of from 18,000 to 20,000 troops was to be used, mainly taken from 'Italie' but also partly drawn from Toulon and partly from the sister Armée des Alpes. No less a person than Hoche was nominally to command this force but, as I have explained,<sup>1</sup> his appointment was but a trap, a mean trick to get him away from his army before arresting him. As he was resting, Dumerbion entered his room and placed him in arrest, sending him next day to Paris under escort. Of course Dumerbion exposed himself to the sarcasms of Hoche, and doubtless he acted with as small courtesy as when he did the same office for his predecessor, Brunet, but, in reality he had no choice, for the order of the Representatives could not be disobeyed: Hoche was an utter stranger to him, and that General himself had no scruples in carrying out similar instructions. The incident is only noteworthy here because Hoche is often represented as coming to replace Dumerbion in command of 'Italie'.<sup>2</sup>

On the front of 'Alpes' and 'Italie' the snow had hitherto kept both the French and the enemy quiet, and so had enabled troops to be sent first to subdue Lyons and then against Toulon. Now the time for active operations had begun, and

<sup>1</sup> Phipps, ii. 123.

<sup>2</sup> e.g. Koch, i. 29.

Dumas received orders from the *Comité* to capture Mont Cenis and the Little Saint-Bernard. These instructions had first been given him in January 1794, when he had replied with the suggestion that, as the passes then seemed impracticable, it would be better, if the Swiss would permit it, to enter the Milanese by the Saint-Gothard. This was so strange an idea that the Minister requested the *Comité* to recall the General, Dumas explained that the suggestion came from General Dours, and that he himself, not knowing the country, had only transmitted it, but, though he was allowed to remain in command, the incident told against him. The attacks were made and, though the troops, provided with woollen wraps and *crampons* to secure their footing on the ice, were at first beaten back, on the 24th April the Little Saint-Bernard was taken and Dumas, having made successful diversions on other points, on the 14th May drove the enemy from Mont Cenis. The French took kindly to mountain warfare, and it is good to read the orders by Sauret for one column: his troops, wearing shirts over their uniforms (and one is rather surprised at their having such garments anywhere at this period), were to pay no attention to any fire from outposts or from the body of the enemy, but were to charge with their bayonets, uttering 'des cris, des hurlements' to disconcert the foe. But the yells were to be given at the proper time only, when the points of the bayonets were in the loins of the enemy. Dumas was delighted with his men. 'The French soldier', he wrote 'has conducted himself with intrepidity and heroism: he has respected misfortune and has shared his food with the inhabitants ruined by the scourge of war. . . . Europe will learn with admiration the great deeds of the Armée des Alpes.' Carnot was as lyrical; 'Glory to the conquerors of Mont Cenis and of Mont Saint-Bernard! Glory to the invincible Armée des Alpes, and' (of course) 'to the Representatives who have guided it in the path of Victory. . . . Continue to push more and more "le roi des marmottes" (i.e. the King of Sardinia). We place the greatest confidence in you and in the energy and the talents of the brave General Dumas.' On the 13th June the *Comité*, through Carnot, wrote to the Representatives, 'Victory, dear colleagues, does not deny itself to the Armée des Alpes, because that army knows how to attain it by prudence and valour.' Sensible Victory!



On the right the Armée d'Italie had been equally successful in carrying out the expedition to Oneglia by land. The first and most important strokes were dealt by Masséna with a body of 20,000 men collected on the coast, while the Representatives and General Bonaparte moved with the right column, along the sea line. It is needless here to go into the details of the fighting, which has been well and minutely described by writers careful to correct one another. The main idea of the plan, drawn up by Bonaparte, was to turn the left of the enemy, when the formidable works which had halted the army would fall. The advance began on the night of the 5th April and after a series of combats Masséna entered Saorge, and then, in conjunction with the centre under Macquard, threw the enemy over the Colle di Tenda to Limone. On the left Garnier<sup>1</sup> had pressed the enemy up the Vésubie valley, past Saint-Martin Lantosque, his extreme left brigade, under Sérurier, clearing the Isola valley to reach a hand to the troops of the 'Alpes' at Isola, and then forcing the enemy, who resisted here but slightly, over the Colle delle Finestre. The formidable camps of the Aution and of Mille Fourches, against which the army under Brunet had broken its teeth, had been turned, and at last 'Italie' held the crest of the main line of the Alps, with *débouchés* into the plains of Piedmont. On the right Masséna held the line from the sea to Ormea in the Tanaro valley, Macquard in the centre held the Colle di Tenda, and Garnier (under whom Sérurier served), stretched with the left from the Camp de Tournoux to the upper Vésubie, and Finestrella. The Representatives deigned to be pleased with the result. At first many things had gone wrong; snow had delayed marches, rivers could not be crossed, and the operations, planned to last five days, had taken thirty-eight to complete. At one time the Representatives had blamed Masséna for the delays and failures and even threatened, according to Koch, to dismiss him, but in reality it was to his personal exertions that success had been due, and this the Representatives at last saw. Bonaparte was praised for his plans, and Masséna for his victory; while Dumerbion was rewarded. He had done little but approve of the fresh suggestions made by Masséna during the operations, but on the 27th May the Representatives confirmed

<sup>1</sup> Garnier, a General of Division, had joined from Toulon, leaving Nice on the 23rd April: Fabry (1794), Documents, 344, Texte, 291.

his appointment as Commander-in-Chief, which had hitherto been but temporary, and this was soon approved by the *Comité de Salut public*.

The main features of the ground fought over can be studied in the large scale Italian map,<sup>1</sup> as they came into prominence later from the clever strokes dealt at the retreating Austrians in 1800 by Suchet. The troops fought well as a rule, although on one occasion the sudden appearance of a body of the enemy in an unexpected position, and the approach of what was really a reinforcement, but was mistaken for a hostile body, sent a column hitherto advancing to the strains,

‘Mourir pour la patrie’

into flight to the sound of ‘Nous sommes trahis’. An interesting trace of old times is found in the conduct of the commandant of the enemy’s post at Ormea, when Masséna prepared to dash at him with two companies of grenadiers. Acknowledging that he could not hold the castle, the commandant still objected to such an unceremonious entry. ‘Draw back’, he implored, ‘and let me fire five or six gun-shots in the air, and we will then write that I surrendered after an honourable defence.’ One is sorry that the old gentleman could not have his modest wish, which I think Kléber in the ‘Sambre-et-Meuse’ would have granted, but the impatient Masséna answered that the Republicans were pressed for time, and did not make war like children at play. Poor old Captain! The sudden flood of military ardour, swollen by race-hatred and caste-bitterness, was to sweep from the field all such men as he.

In later days the reputation of the troops of ‘Italie’ for plundering was so bad that one reads with some astonishment the report made by the commandant of the fort of Vintimille. ‘I should not be telling the truth if I did not say that the French army has passed through in the most edifying discipline and with the most proper conduct. Had the soldiers been 30,000 novices of religious orders they could not have been more careful and civil. It is astonishing that one hardly heard their voices, which proves how strictly they observe the rigorous orders of their leaders’.<sup>2</sup> It seems hardly fair, after this testimony, to remark that the French had special reasons for not giving any

<sup>1</sup> Koch, *Masséna*, i. 62-4.

<sup>2</sup> Fabry (1794), *Documents*, 210.

annoyance to the Genoese when they passed through part of their territory.

The complete success of the operations was due mainly to Masséna, and seldom has a General had a more arduous task. As usual, the want of shoes much hindered the march to victory; the commissariat, true to their traditions, if they supplied mules to transport rations, omitted to send sacks to pack the food in; at least on one occasion Masséna had almost to bargain with a regiment that it should retain its position; and the centre division joined in late and with little zeal, when combined movements began. Dumerbion, almost all the time at Nice, was rather anxious not to give orders, even when applied to, whilst the Representatives, with or without the advice of Bonaparte, were ready enough to do so. Throughout, Masséna showed himself the great captain he was: dashing at one position in front, then turning back at another in rear, re-forming a repulsed column and urging every one forward, he was the soul of the enterprise. If his daring was now proved, so was his independence: when a little later Dumerbion threatened him with the *Tribunal Révolutionnaire*, which had struck dread into the hearts of so many intrepid Generals, Masséna replied, 'I never fear being brought before the *Tribunal Révolutionnaire* for negligence or for forgetfulness of my duties; my heart is pure and Republican.' This is the same man who, undisturbed by the threats of the Directory, was to hang on in front of Zurich till the moment came for his swoop on the foe.

What had been the part of Bonaparte in all this? Only that of a spectator, says M. Jung, whilst the General himself says that the success of his plans increased his reputation, and already public opinion called for his appointment as Commander-in-Chief. Of course in one sense he was a spectator, just as it might be said of any commander, still more of any one who, supplying the plans, has to see others carry them out. It could not have been as a mere spectator, nor as commanding the artillery, that Bonaparte accompanied the Representatives with the extreme right column. According to Koch, Bonaparte was giving advice to Mouret, the leader on the extreme right, on the 9th April, that is, sixteen days before Dumerbion started from Nice. It was natural enough, or rather inevitable, that he should accompany the Commander-in-Chief when that General



and the Representatives returned to Nice, and when the plan had obviously succeeded. If, however, the whole plan is to be attributed to him, we might ask how far he was surprised when the scheme for five days was dragged out to twenty-four, or to thirty-eight, if we count the attack on the Colle di Tenda as a separate matter. Perhaps the results of these calculations, by whomsoever made, may have been useful to him later.

These operations had cleared not only the front of the Army of Italy, but also that of the 'Alpes', and the road to the longed-for plains of Italy and Piedmont seemed clear, at least to Bonaparte, who had several times talked to Masséna at Ormea of his plans; but for such an advance it would have been necessary to place both armies under one head. An amalgamation of this kind was always difficult under the Revolutionary system: first came the opposition of the staffs, and Dumerbion, at best physically incompetent for the post, did not wish to have the command-in-chief. Then, a more serious obstacle, came the jealousy of the groups of Representatives with each army, for they disliked anything that seemed to diminish their own importance, and their rivalry here led to heartburnings, as on the Rhine. A sort of council of Representatives and Generals from both armies was held on the 20th May at Colmars to which Bonaparte with two Representatives, the younger Robespierre and Ricord, went from 'Italie', whilst Dumerbion remained at Nice. The 'Alpes' had been reduced by the dispatch of 10,000 men to reinforce the Armée du Rhin, and only a small operation was carried out by an advance of forces of both armies at the end of June 1794, on Demonte, on the Stura. In this both Masséna and Sérurier were engaged, and the enemy was driven down the Stura on Cuneo. The conference at Colmars failed to get 'Alpes' to join the great advance for which Bonaparte, the younger Robespierre, and Ricord wished, yet what could not be done openly might, they thought, be accomplished by almost forcing the hand of 'Alpes', so Dumerbion was induced to adopt the plan for attacking the fort of Demonte which concealed the greater project for a dash into the plains. This project, however, was not communicated to Dumerbion or even to Salicetti. The first step begun, the young Robespierre started for Paris in order to lay the great plan before the *Comité* and before his formidable brother.

The mere fact that Bonaparte was sent to Colmars as the official military representative of the Armée d'Italie is conclusive as to his position as adviser to Dumerbion and to the Representatives with that army. The Chief of the Staff, or some other similar officer, not the commander of the artillery, would, especially at that time, have been the natural choice. That the plan then drawn up was his is also plain, for the Representative Laporte with the Armée des Alpes refers to him in connexion with it in the most unmistakable terms. 'Bonaparte, who drew it up,<sup>1</sup> did not know then, nor did I myself . . . whether the Col de l'Argentière would or would not be disputed with us by the enemy: so it is necessary that Bonaparte should be informed that we have got possession of the Col de l'Argentière.' Then, suggesting to his colleagues with 'Italie' certain operations, and asking whether it would be better for all the columns of both 'Alpes' and 'Italie' to meet between the Barricades and Demonte, or that only two columns should meet 'according to the plan of Bonaparte', he goes on, 'Consult this General officer and show him my letter; examine the map well and pronounce'.<sup>2</sup> Now the General commanding the artillery of 'Italie' was a curious person for the Representatives with another army to consult, if they did not accept him as the adviser or framer of plans for both forces.

Arriving at Paris about the 3rd July, Augustin Robespierre submitted the plan on the 19th. According to it, the Republic could not wage war on the offensive on all points at once. In the South the Spanish frontier offered good situations for the defensive, and what advantage could be gained by penetrating into Spain? No cool-headed man, thought General Bonaparte in 1794, would dream of taking Madrid, and the war in the Peninsula would not affect any other theatre of operations. On the Italian frontier the two armies, 'Alpes' and 'Italie', occupied the mountainous circumference of a semicircle, the diameter of which, lying in a plain, was held by the enemy, who could nourish their troops and move easily from point to point, so that the French required double the number of troops in order to be sufficiently strong on every point. Let, therefore, the defensive be adopted on the Spanish frontier, and all that might be spared from the two armies there be brought to the Italian

<sup>1</sup> 'quil'a rédigé.'

<sup>2</sup> Fabry, ii (*Documents*), 624-6; *ibid.*, i (*Texte*), 466-74.

frontier, where 'Alpes' and 'Italie' should be united. All this pointed to such a dash into Italy as Bonaparte was to accomplish in the year 1796. But then came a passage, 'Strike Germany, never Spain nor Italy. If we should obtain great successes, we should not make the mistake of burying ourselves in Italy whilst Germany shows a redoubtable front and one which will not be weakened.' This seems inconsistent, but it may have been meant to conciliate opposition, and it may not have been intended to refer to such an advance against the Austrians as Bonaparte was to carry out; indeed, the next paragraph says that if national pride and vengeance called the French to Rome, politics and interest ought always to direct them on Vienna, that is, eastwards and not southwards. Anyhow this passage, according to M. Jung, was struck out by the elder Robespierre.

Meanwhile General Dumas had been removed. It is quite possible that, as the fertile brain of his son suggested, there was envy and suspicion of the mulatto, and that his humanity had given offence. Finding, it is said, four poor wretches accused of trying to prevent the church bells from being melted down and about to be guillotined, he made his A.D.C. burn the machine in order that he might warm himself at the fire, and he sent the prisoners off into the mountains. In reality he was replaced because he seemed to be opposed to the great plan for joint operations with 'Italie': also he was at variance with his staff, especially the somewhat masterful Commissary-General Alexandre. On the 4th July he handed over the command of the Alpes to General Petit-Guillaume, and proceeded to Paris. His recall was not intended to be a disgrace, and he was placed at the head of the *École Militaire*, established at the Camp des Sablons. Only three days afterwards he was sent to the 'Sambre-et-Meuse' for a moment probably with reinforcements, and then on the 30th August he was sent to La Vendée to command the Armée de l'Ouest.

Dumas' recall shows that, had the elder Robespierre retained his power, in all probability the plan would have been adopted, and then we might have seen an attempt at such a campaign as was carried out in 1796, but conducted by a sort of company, Bonaparte supplying the brains, the Representatives the motive power, Dumerbion issuing the orders, and Masséna dealing the



stroke. But doubtless the *Comité* or the Representatives, when fully aware of the risk, would have halted the troops. However, when the younger Robespierre reached Paris, such grave dissensions existed amongst the members of the *Comité*, and such a growing indignation at the tyranny of Maximilien Robespierre, that the plan was looked on with suspicion, and nothing was sanctioned but an expedition on Cuneo. Then came Thermidor, and on the 28th July the two Robespierres, the elder with his jaw shattered by a pistol shot, and the younger half dead from the injuries he had received in throwing himself out of a window in an attempt at suicide, went to the scaffold. All unaware, the men that had destroyed Robespierre had dealt the first blow at the Reign of Terror and at the power of the Representatives over the armies.

Robespierre fallen, the plan of his brother was taken as condemned, and on the very day on which he was guillotined the *Comité* changed their orders for an expedition on Cuneo, and decided that 'Italie' was to restrict itself to the defence of the coasts and to holding Marseilles and Toulon well garrisoned: instructions which the Representatives at once carried out. The reasons for this halt were given by Carnot in a dispatch which is most interesting as showing how far his conceptions of war fell below that of Bonaparte, and how little he was above the foolish idea that no advance should ever be made that endangered any point of the frontier, an idea which had from the first done such harm. Carnot declared that Augustin Robespierre, through the tyranny of his elder brother, had forced on them a plan for entering Piedmont which would have paralysed the armies of the Pyrenees and the forces in La Vendée, whilst abandoning the frontier and exposing Corsica and Toulon to attack by the enemy. All this too, declared the short-sighted Carnot, to take Cuneo or Demonte, the fall of which, if achieved, would not dethrone 'le roi des marmottes', as he discourteously called the worthy Victor-Amédée III. It is true that Carnot held out a vague hope of another campaign which should not be interrupted by snow, as writing on the 13th August, he assumed that Bonaparte's plan would be if now attempted. But what is obvious from this dispatch is that Carnot would certainly have seen danger, and probably treachery, in any proposal to risk a sprat to catch a whale.

One curious result of Thermidor was the temporary disgrace of Bonaparte. The great plan had at first been known only to him and the younger Robespierre and Ricord: it had been kept secret not only from the two Representatives, Albitte and Laporte, with the 'Alpes', but even from Salicetti, who was with 'Italie'. The plan was now known, and Albitte and Laporte understood that the intention had been to force their hands and to bring down 'Alpes' to the help of 'Italie', and even to amalgamate it with 'Italie', the latter army being the directing force. Salicetti was still more angry. He had remarked the interviews of his colleagues with Bonaparte, he had been puzzled by their insisting on retaining the troops (whom he wanted for a foolish expedition to Corsica), in order that 'Italie' might be reinforced by them. Worse still, they had induced Salicetti to go to Barcelonnette to concert with the Representatives with 'Alpes' the operations nominally intended against Demonte only, their real object being to get him out of the way. Unfortunately the Barbets, or armed peasantry, had tried to waylay him, and had assassinated instead the Colonel of the 100th Regiment, who was following at a short interval. Salicetti believed that this stroke was the act of Ricord, who, being a Representative, could only be dealt with by the Convention. He joined with Albitte and Laporte in denouncing the younger Robespierre and Ricord for concealing their plan, whilst, with unexplained inconsistency, he said that Ricord and Bonaparte had acknowledged to him that they only intended a semblance of a siege of Cuneo but that nothing must be said to the Representatives with 'Alpes'. The plan, the three Representatives hinted, was known to the enemy; 'Bonaparte was their man, their maker of the plan which we must carry out'. Meantime Bonaparte, leaving Nice on the 11th July, had reached Genoa on the night of the 15th, charged with two missions, an open one, to settle certain differences with the Senate; and a secret one, to see what he could of the defences of Savona and Genoa, with a view to the possibilities of the next campaign, and to inquire into the conduct of Tilly, the French Minister at Genoa. On the 28th July he was back at Nice, and then went on the 2nd August to the camp of the Sieg, returning to Nice on the 5th. Next day at Barcelonnette, the three Representatives Albitte, Laporte, and Salicetti, declaring that he had lost their confidence

through his most suspicious conduct and especially through his journey to Genoa, ordered him to be provisionally suspended, and directed Dumerbion to arrest him and to send him with his papers sealed to the *Comité* at Paris. It was perhaps thought more convenient to ground this on the visit to Genoa, with which it was easy to link treachery, rather than on his having prepared a plan approved by two Representatives and openly laid before the *Comité*. Dumerbion received this order on the night of the 8th August and had it carried out next morning. Leaving Nice under escort on the 10th, by the 12th August Bonaparte was imprisoned in Fort Carré, near Antibes. General Casabianca took his place.

Instead of kissing the rod, Bonaparte exploded in anger and wrote to the Representatives in a tone to which they could have been little accustomed. His temper spread to his staff, Junot and Marmont, who had accompanied him on the mission to Genoa and who now prepared to rescue him, if he were sent on the fatal journey to Paris; but he opposed this project. However, he was saved that trial, for the examination of his papers disclosed nothing incriminating him, and though Tilly seems to have resented the secret mission regarding himself which he suspected the General to have had, the real and main object of the journey was soon evident and was acknowledged to have been wise and foreseeing. Salicetti, half hostile, half friendly, stopped his being sent to Paris, and on the 20th August Albitte and Salicetti declared they had found nothing positive to justify suspicion and that the visit to Genoa was in a special mission, on which he had reported: they therefore ordered him to be set at liberty. On the 24th August, the day he returned to Nice, they reported to the *Comité* that they had released but not reinstated him. The truth was that they had found the mistake they had made in adopting the defensive so hastily and Bonaparte was required to assist the invalid Dumerbion for active operations. The dispatches of the Representatives show that in Bonaparte they were releasing a great deal more than the mere commander of the artillery of 'Italie'. On the 20th August they wrote that they had considered 'the utility which the military and local knowledge of the said Bonaparte might be to the Republic, and wished to receive from him all the information that he could and should give on the former situation



of the army, and on its ulterior dispositions'. On the 24th August they wrote more strongly. 'We', they said, 'have been convinced that the talents of the military man can be useful to us—talents which, we cannot deny, become very necessary in an army of which he knows more than any one else, and where men of this class are extremely difficult to find.' They went on to suggest that he might 'reconquer confidence and resume a post, which moreover he is very capable of filling with success, and in which the circumstances and critical position in which the Armée d'Italie finds itself may oblige us to reinstate him provisionally, awaiting the orders you' (the *Comité*) 'may give concerning him'. In plain words, they could not do without him, and the *Comité* soon restored him to his former post as commanding the artillery of 'Italie'.<sup>1</sup>

Here comes an amusing instance of the difficulties of those who wish to detract from Bonaparte's position in 1793. Was he the author of the Note submitted to the *Comité* by the younger Robespierre? The Note is in the writing of his A.D.C., Lieut. Junot, who, according to the Commission entrusted with the publication of the correspondence of Napoleon, never quitted him, wrote under his dictation, and recopied his memoirs on the war. This seems in accordance with what we know of Junot, but MM. Krebs and Moris have their doubts. Is the writing really that of Junot? And, assuming that it is, might not Junot have gone with the younger Robespierre to Paris to assist him with his military knowledge? As they admit, no proof of this can be found and, while they still consider the supposition to be not improbable, it seems too absurd to believe that a young Lieutenant should be taken for such a purpose, and that no reference to a visit to Paris at such a momentous time should appear in the voluminous memoirs of Madame Junot. One piece of evidence, given fairly enough by MM. Krebs and Moris, shows that the enemy took a much higher view of Bonaparte's position than suits his detractors. On the 3rd September 1794 the Archduke Ferdinand wrote to General Colli: 'It is true that General Bonaparte, lately taken

<sup>1</sup> Koch, *Masséna*, i. 106. M. Jung, *Bonaparte*, ii. 457–8 treats Bonaparte as if unemployed and without fixed post after his release, but his own work shows, ii. 459–60, that, when a special work was assigned to Bonaparte, he was addressed as 'le général d'artillerie à l'armée d'Italie'.

to Paris in chains, returns with the command. He is a Corsican, bold, enterprising, who will certainly wish to risk some attack.' The Prince therefore believed Bonaparte to be something more than a spectator of the campaign, and even M. Jung acknowledges his participation in the plan for this period of the campaign.

The next move in the campaign of 1794 was made by the enemy. In September they had planned an expedition from Tortona by the valley of the eastern Bormida to Carcare, whence they intended to seize Savona, a Genoese port, hoping to cut off the French from obtaining supplies from Genoa. Reaching Carcare, they halted for a time, and Dumerbion determined to strike at them on a plan prepared by Bonaparte. Whilst Sérurier on the extreme left demonstrated on Vinadio on the upper Stura, and Macquart in the centre did the same at Limone as if for an advance by the Colle di Tenda, the main columns under Dumerbion and Masséna were to march north as if for Ceva, and then swinging round eastwards, to try to seize the line of retreat of the enemy. On the 15th September Dumerbion started with Bonaparte and the Representatives Albitte and Salicetti and, though the enemy slipped away from the final stroke, still by the 22nd September Dumerbion was in Dego and the enemy had to retire to Acqui. Then Dumerbion turned south for Savona on the coast, where he, Masséna, Bonaparte, and the Representatives arrived on the 25th. Instead of seizing that port, the French took possession of the better harbour of Vado; and now, although their line was much extended, they were better off than before, because the coast trade with Genoa could be carried on with greater security from the English fleet. This expedition, in which Joubert took part as Adjutant-General, is interesting, partly because, although Masséna was most active, Dumerbion actually directed the operations in a manner he had not done before, and also because places to be well known hereafter to the army were now passed, Cosseria, Calizzano, Monte Settepani, Millesimo, Cairo, Montefreddo, San Giacomo, and others.

Dumerbion, always ill, had long been anxious to retire, and the altered and diminished importance of the Representatives no longer made the retention of a submissive General necessary, so on the 3rd November General Schérer was nominated to

replace him. The new commander came from the *Armée de Sambre-et-Meuse*, where, under Jourdan, he had been in the position of a wing commander.<sup>1</sup> Leaving that army in the full flush of advance and success, he was ready to throw his troops into the enemy's country, but 'Italie' was weakened by having to furnish a division of 15,000 men, in which Joubert went as a Lieut.-Colonel and Adjutant-General, for an expedition from Toulon. Also the troops were suffering terribly from want and disease, as they always did when tied for long to the coast-line. Even in 1794 Masséna had to report that, though he had tents, which he had captured from the enemy, the men were making trousers of them. Now typhus struck down more than half his division, and he himself, falling ill, had to get leave and go back to Nice to recover his health amongst his family. To replace him, Sérurier was called to Nice from the left, on the 17th December. Both Garnier, commanding the left, and Dumerbion had applied for the promotion of Sérurier, who on the 22nd December was nominated General of Division by the Representatives and was placed in command of the right. A certificate of his services, given at the time by the careful Garnier, describes him as without any infirmity, except that he had lost almost all his teeth from a musket-shot in Hanover. Writing to Miollis, Sérurier said, 'You are on the left, I have a brave man on the right, and Joubert in the centre, so I am tranquil.'

With 'Alpes' Petit-Guillaume's command lasted till the 5th December. The permanent successor of Dumas was General Moulin, who, though of a better stamp than Doppet or Carteaux, can hardly be called a soldier.<sup>2</sup> When appointed on the 7th October he, the future Director of 1799, was in La Vendée commanding the *Armée des Côtes de Brest*, and, being detained by illness, he did not join till the 5th December. Snow kept the army quiet in the cantonments in which they had been since the beginning of October.

With 'Italie' a maritime expedition was prepared at Toulon, some 15,000 men being allotted to it. Its object was nominally Corsica, but Marmont asserts that Bonaparte had planned it for Tuscany, whilst Bonaparte and Koch says it was for the mouth of the Tiber and for Rome. Bonaparte was to go in command of the artillery, taking with him Captain Junot as

<sup>1</sup> Phipps, ii. 141.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 54.



A D.C. and Captain Marmont in command of a small bridge-equipment. On the 3rd March the staff embarked, but when the squadron, fifteen sail of the line, sailed on the 11th March, it took only 3,000 men, the rest remaining in harbour until the English fleet should be driven off or disabled. The *Berwick*, an English 74 under jury-masts, was captured, but on the 14th March the English fleet under Vice-Admiral Hotham was met, and the French, losing two line-of-battle ships, returned to Genoa. The men disembarked and rejoined the army, losing two-thirds of their numbers by desertion, which always raged amongst the troops of the Republic when they passed through their native departments. Bonaparte with his staff had not left the harbour, and now went back to the army. He had, he says, seen the folly of the enterprise, and was glad to be well quit of it.

A revision of the lists of Generals with the different armies was now being carried on, and by this Masséna was to be transferred to the Armée du Nord, and Sérurier was to go, only as General of Brigade, to 'Pyrénées Occidentales', where he would have served under Moncey; his promotion as General of Division by the Representatives was acknowledged by the War Office. The removal of these officers, especially that of Masséna, seems extraordinary, unless Dumerbion, irritated by Masséna's occasional resistance, had wished to get rid of him. Schérer declared that they would be difficult to replace, and that their departure would be a great loss to the Armée d'Italie: Sérurier was described by Schérer as 'a very good officer, devoted to his duties; his patriotism has been attacked in the time of Hébert and his consorts; he has emerged victorious from all these charges. In my opinion he is worthy of the post he holds on the right of the active army'. The Representative Beffroy, a countryman of Sérurier, backed up Schérer, and both Generals remained with the Armée d'Italie, Sérurier's promotion to General of Division being confirmed on the 13th June. Another officer was not so fortunate. By date of promotion Bonaparte was one of the junior Generals of artillery, and Schérer does not seem to have liked him. The infirm Dumerbion might not care to be jealous of the position with the Representatives acquired by the young General, but Schérer would intend to command his own army, and now, as certainly in 1796, he disliked having

plans drawn for him. Bonaparte's name had been mentioned for the command-in-chief, and it is but natural to find Schérer making this note on Bonaparte: 'This officer is a general of the artillery arm, in which arm he has real knowledge, but having a little too much ambition and intrigue for his advancement.' There were too many Corsicans with the army, and the Government did not depend much on their loyalty. Also, in the reaction after Thermidor, his connexion with the Robespierres would tell against him. Accordingly he was removed from the army which he had practically guided, and, almost in derision it would seem, was first posted to command an infantry brigade in La Vendée till a vacancy as Inspector of Artillery should occur. We have seen him nominally in command of the artillery of the Armée de l'Ouest under Hoche. He left Marseilles on the 2nd May 1795 and reached Paris on the 10th, having stopped four days on the way at Châtillon-sur-Seine, at the house of Marmont's father. Marmont himself, with the inseparable Junot, accompanied him without official position. He says that he delayed in order to allow matters to quiet down at the capital after the affair of the 1st Prairial, when the last insurrection of his former friends, the Jacobins, was crushed, but this must be a mistake, because that was on 20th May. Madame Junot describes him as in Paris at the time and, although I think she makes him arrive too early, she can hardly be wrong on the point of his presence at the time of the *émeute*.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Corr. Nap.*, xxix. 42; Marmont, i. 59-62; Mme Junot, i. 227-49.

## XIV

### KELLERMANN

(May to August 1795)

Danger from the rear. Kellermann's fortifications. The Allies attack. French right wing withdrawn. The English fleet. Kellermann's plans for an advance.

#### CONTEMPORARY EVENTS

1795 21st July. Hoche's victory at Quiberon.  
22nd July. Peace with Spain.  
5th September. French armies cross the Rhine.

AT Marseilles Bonaparte had, about the 1st May, met Kellermann coming to command both armies, with his Chief of the Staff, Berthier, and had given him all the information for which he asked. Kellermann may already, while in the Capital, have heard of Bonaparte, but this interview is to be noted as probably the first occasion on which not only Kellermann, but also Berthier, met their future master, now on his way to that state of discredit and unemployment from which they were just emerging. Schérer, still waiting for the troops from the late maritime expedition before attempting an advance by the Colle di Tenda, had been removed and, as we have seen, appointed to succeed Dugommier in command of 'Pyrénées Orientales'. One might have expected that the command would fall to Masséna, but, whether his differences with Dumerbion and Schérer had been taken as showing too independent a character, or whether his recent illness told against him, or whether he had already given signs of a tendency to neglect matters until the moment of action, he was passed over, and, as we have seen, was nearly sent away to the Armée du Nord. Kellermann was far senior to him and had great claims: indeed, his restoration to favour seems to have been complete, so that we may suppose that due regard was now being paid to his services and success at Valmy and with the 'Alpes' in 1793. On the 3rd March 1795, as joint action of the two armies was felt to be necessary, he was made again generalissimo of 'Alpes' and 'Italie', but this



time he took 'Italie' under his immediate command, as the more important force, leaving the 'Alpes' under General Moulin. On the 19th March Kellermann was already writing to the *Comité* on the situation of his armies. As Schérer was going to what was considered a more important command, there was no question of supersession: indeed, on the 1st April Schérer was writing to him, pressing him to come at once to 'Italie' so that he himself might join his new charge.

In coming to an army new to him in 1795, Kellermann also, as far as military matters were concerned, came into a world new to that which he had left in 1793 to go to prison. France was getting the blood out of her eyes and, although much was still to be regretted in the course of the government, the position of the commanders was more assured, the rage of the Representatives was spent, and the armies were better organized, for the *amalgame* was progressing, and they were now capable of movements impossible before. Also a new generation of commanders, all except Moreau soldiers, led the armies of the Republic; Moreau, Jourdan, Pichegru, Pérignon, Schérer, Moncey, Canclaux, Hoche, and Aubert du Bayet. All of these were men whose place in history is well known; and all of them, except Canclaux and Aubert du Bayet, had a future before them, although not always a happy one. Emerging from the bloody mist in which she had wandered, France had placed her armies on the Rhine, and, no longer thinking of mere defence, she prepared to strike into the territory of the enemy on all parts of her frontiers.

The new Chief of the Staff, General of Brigade Alexandre Berthier, had long been in the shade. Removed from the Armée des Côtes de la Rochelle in July 1793, he had been unemployed till now, notwithstanding his remonstrances, but at last this disgrace was to cease. On the 11th February 1795 he petitioned the *Comité*, recalling his services; he was supported by seven Representatives, most of whom had seen him at work in La Vendée, and Kellermann once again stated his high opinion of the man who had been his Chief of the Staff in the Armée du Centre. On the 14th March Berthier was informed of his new post, no doubt on the application of Kellermann. The staff of 'Alpes' remained separate, but with 'Italie' the former Chief of the Staff, General Gaultier, seems to have retained his post.

For some unexplained reason Berthier did not join Kellermann till May, declaring to Clarke, then head of the historical and topographical bureau of the Convention, that he had found the army in the most complete disorganization and in the most destitute state. He set himself to get everything into order. Kellermann had brought with him two A.D.C.'s, his son (the future Marengo General, now Colonel), and Lasalle, who was to be the smoking, swearing, smashing light cavalry General of the Empire.

One thing Lasalle acknowledged he had learnt from Kellermann—economy. 'I was not allowed to eat more than one cutlet for breakfast, he would have taken the stick to me, the good Marshal. He wanted to make me a clerk, and once he made me write sixty letters in a single morning: I should not have succeeded in that trade.'<sup>1</sup>

The strength of the army was nominally from 80,000 to 90,000, but hardly 25,000 were available, while its supply departments were disorganized. It was a very different force to that which was to fall to Bonaparte, for of the men with whom we are concerned there were only Masséna and Sérurier, both Generals of Division, and Lieut.-Colonel Suchet, with Adjutant-General Joubert and Captain Duroc. Of these Masséna, who had rejoined early in April 1795, was the chief; indeed he might almost be said to have been the second in command. At present he commanded the first of the three divisions into which the right wing was divided; Sérurier, less known, had the second. The volunteer battalion of Lieut.-Colonel Suchet was now with the army, figuring first in the states given us in March 1795, and being one of the twenty-four volunteer battalions not yet amalgamated with regulars. Colonel and Adjutant-General Joubert had earned remark for his bravery. Second Captain Duroc of the artillery, either now or soon, was in the bridge-train.

The Armée des Alpes had been drawn on to reinforce 'Italie', but as Kellermann was responsible for both, this, as far as he was concerned, was but robbing Peter to pay Paul. Then the population of Toulon once more suddenly rose, armed themselves, this time in the Jacobin interests, and marched on

<sup>1</sup> Général Comte Antoine-Charles-Louis de Lasalle (1775-1809), killed at Wagram, *Fastes*, ii. 52-4; Thoumas, *Grand Cavaliers*, i. 1-49.

Marseilles to repress the Thermidorian or Moderate party, while the weak garrison looked on helplessly. At first Kellermann himself intended to move on Toulon; Masséna was to have replaced him temporarily with 'Italie', and to have been succeeded in his wing command by Sérurier. But eventually Freytag with 4,000 men was sent and, although the rising had already been suppressed, the army was weakened for some time by this detachment. Then Kellermann was ordered to have a force of 12,000 or 18,000 men ready to move on Lyons. Thus in 1795, as in 1793, he had to face the enemy in front while revolt threatened his rear. His position indeed was as bad as possible for, in plain language, his army was stretched along a strip of coast, lining a chain of hills with its base on its left flank, and having immediately behind it a sea generally held by a hostile fleet, or at all events liable to be swept by the enemy's vessels. It was 'operating on a front parallel to the line communicating with its base', or, as Hamley prefers to put it, it was 'forming front to a flank', while the enemy was operating on a front perpendicular to the lines communicating with his base. It is true that the front of the Armée des Alpes, thrown forward at right angles to that of 'Italie', might seem to threaten the communications of the enemy, but the strength of that army, weakened by a detachment of 3,000 to watch Lyons, was so small (only 15,000 effectives) that it was really tied to the defensive and might almost be neglected. The only escape from the dangers of the position was to take the offensive and, whatever Jomini may say, Kellermann's instructions were to that effect. In 1796 Bonaparte, finding the armies in a similar position, won the campaign, but he had sufficient force to escape from the evils of the situation by a rapid advance; Kellermann had not that advantage, although he agreed with the plan of the *Comité* to take the offensive. Reinforcements were promised from the Rhine, but the only bright spot on his horizon was the hope of the speedy conclusion of a peace with Spain: then he would receive large reinforcements from the two armies of the Pyrenees. Meantime he had to hold his ground with his two armies, whose combined strength was over 45,000 (or according to Kellermann himself 30,000), for an offensive against an enemy of 50,000; for Austria, instead of supplying a mere contingent, as hitherto, had now brought the Army of Lombardy



up to strength, and De Wins had been made Generalissimo of the Austrian and Sardinian forces.

Kellermann's service in Poland in 1771 (before a good many of the men now under him had been born) probably led to one of the first measures he now took: he approved of the collection into one battalion of all the Poles then serving in the different regiments of his army. This constituted a corps at first only 250 strong, but Polish prisoners and Austrian deserters were added, and the command was given to a M. Tauffers, himself an ex-Major in the service of Austria. This body was, however, employed too soon and on too desperate a mission by Kellermann's successor Schérer, for it was landed on an expedition to seize treasure deposited by the enemy at San Pier d'Arena, a little to the west of Genoa, when the Austrians drove it off and, capturing Tauffers, hung him as a deserter and a pillager. The battalion was not employed again until 1796, when it formed the nucleus of the Polish Legion which shed its blood on so many fields. Another measure, the formation of special battalions of grenadiers taken from their regiments to guard the passes, was a usual proceeding at the time, but experience proved that such chance formations, however good the individual soldiers composing them might be, were in the end inferior to ordinary regiments.

The line held by the Armée d'Italie now ran from Savona to the crests of the hills, with its right on the strong positions of Monte Alto, San Giacomo, Melogno, and Settepani; the centre held the upper basin of the Roja and the Colle di Tenda, and the left carried on the line to Belvedere. This line was strong, if properly held. Kellermann trusted too much, it is said, to fortifications, and multiplied the works unnecessarily, until each of the posts was weakly held, but against this charge it must be noted that where (as at the Colle di Tenda) his instructions were complied with and the works completed, the result was satisfactory; whilst, when his line was eventually broken, it was exactly where the works ordered had not been carried out. He considered it important to hold his present line as long as possible, for the reinforcements he expected would make him safe, even if they did not enable him to take the offensive. But

<sup>1</sup> Krebs-Moris, ii. 237, note 3 and *Pièces justificatives* 316-20; Jomini, *Rev.*, vii. 81-2.

while he was improving his position and preparing for retreat if he should be forced on any important point, De Wins attacked. In front of 'Italie' De Wins intended to use the Austrian troops by the coast, while Colli with the Sardinians advanced on the upper Tanaro, and on the 18th June the Austrians began massing in front of Masséna's position. That General wished either to strike at the force in his front, or else, drawing back his right wing up the hills from Vado to San Giacomo to take in flank the force advancing by the coast. Kellermann, however, rejected both proposals, for he had much of the natural but mistaken objection to giving up any ground. After meeting with a curious difficulty at Savona, to be related farther on, De Wins attacked on the 24th June, but, though he renewed his attempts on the 25th and 26th, Laharpe's brigade beat him off in the Segno valley. It was otherwise with Cervoni's brigade holding Monte Alto, San Giacomo, Monte Settepani, and Melogno, farther north, away from the coast. Here the works ordered by Kellermann to be erected on San Giacomo had not been completed, and Masséna (as Kellermann reproached him as early as the 16th June) had only begun them when actually threatened with an attack, at the very time by which they should have been completed. 'Think once for all, my dear General', wrote Kellermann to him, 'that the slightest negligence in war may have the greatest consequence.' As it was, San Giacomo, the very point where, as Koch the biographer of Masséna asserts, there was a vain display of works, was exactly the point least defended. On the 25th June the Austrians took both Monte Alto and San Giacomo, beating off Cervoni, who attempted to retake the works, and forcing him down towards Feligno. The conquerors then got drunk with the liquor left by the French, and ended by abandoning San Giacomo in a panic, when the French for a time again held the post; but it was re-occupied by the enemy on the 26th June. Meantime the Comte d'Argenteau had taken Monte Settepani, and held it with some 4,000 men, but in front of him was the position of Melogno, inaccessible to flank attack and requiring artillery to meet its guns, so that he could not advance. Kellermann and Masséna met at Melogno, and Masséna directed an attempt to retake Monte Settepani in a fog, but he was beaten off. Kellermann then left for Finale, where Berthier was, while reinforcements were drawn from the

left. Joubert was placed in command of one of the three columns of the force which attacked in the afternoon of the 27th June. The fog which had hung over the hills for some days misled the columns, which could not find their way to the gorges of the redoubts, and when they did reach the entrenchments they found that each Hungarian or Austrian soldier had his sword lying on the parapet in front of him, and cut the hands or wrists of the French as they grasped the crest to climb in. Joubert, who was to have a similar experience at Cosseria in 1796, was beaten off, and the enemy had to be left in possession. One other post, Monte Spinarda,<sup>1</sup> held by Masséna's centre, was taken by Colli on the 27th June. A series of assaults had also been delivered along the Colle di Tenda and the whole French line, but Colli, commanding the right of the enemy, did not act harmoniously with De Wins, and with the aid of Kellermann's entrenchments the French held their own at all other posts except those named as lost.

Koch asserts that Masséna had wished to insure success in the counter-attack by drawing the troops on the coast up from Vado to throw them on Monte Settepani and San Giacomo, but that Kellermann insisted on retaining every post and did not dare to leave any point uncovered for a moment, even to regain possession of the really decisive heights. He also says that Bonaparte in Paris was of the same opinion as Masséna. It is ill to argue against the great master of war, but one may sometimes doubt whether he was fully acquainted with the circumstances. The coast Kellermann was asked to abandon was just where his magazines at Vado, San Finale, and Loano were placed, and to uncover these for a day meant their destruction at a time when famine was at least as dangerous a foe as the Austrians. The enemy were in force in front of Vado and were pressing on the line there, so that they would soon have known of any withdrawal. Further, Monte Settepani can hardly be called the decisive point, for Masséna at Melogno prevented any advance from it. The whole line was being attacked, and at any moment a success of the enemy at a point farther west, nearer the base, might entail a precipitate retreat. As a matter of fact, the evacuation of Vado had been ordered on the 25th June, but had been delayed by the difficulty of embarking the stores in rough weather. An instruction, given in the Correspondence of Napo-

<sup>1</sup> The ridge between Calizzano and Garessio running up to San Bernardo.



leon as having been sent to Kellermann by the *Comité* on the news of his retreat, seems not to have been actually dispatched. In it <sup>\*</sup>he is told he ought to have evacuated Vado to strengthen San Giacomo, and it is probable enough that this dwelt in the mind of Bonaparte when in 1796 he drew in his right wing as he advanced. The instruction, however, is obviously based on incomplete information, for it assumes that Melogno had been lost. In 1796 Bonaparte was advancing to pierce the enemy, and what he left in rear did not much concern him, for he had the fertile plains of Italy in front. In 1795 Kellermann, with not half of Bonaparte's force, was about to draw back into a stripped country and every pound of food or stores he could take with him was important.

Kellermann had already determined to draw back his right wing westwards to the far stronger and shorter line running northwards from Borghetto. The magazines of Vado and Finale were evacuated by sea, those at Loano were emptied, and only some twenty iron guns had to be abandoned in the works: the right wing drew back in two movements, ending on the night of the 5th July. This wing was now formed in two divisions, of which Masséna had the right (14,000 men), from the sea by Borghetto, to the north-west on Monte Gale or Alpi; while the left (6,000) under Sérurier, held the hills on the left bank of the Tanaro, with its reserve at Ormea. Kellermann himself had his head-quarters at Toirano. The enemy closed but slowly on the new line, for they could hardly have expected the withdrawal, which came more from the exhaustion of the French Generals and men in a series of struggles than from any actual gain by the Allies. Indeed the Allies themselves felt the effect of the contests, which were longer and more numerous than would appear from my account. For here, as in general in describing mountain warfare, I pass over numerous engagements, each small, but wearying when taken in mass, for the line of troops of both armies stretched along mountains and kept on the alert day and night for weeks together. The centre and left remained on their original positions and held the crests of the mountains as before: indeed, so little were the enemy inspirited by the result, that they settled down to fortify themselves on their new ground. It is characteristic of the period, and perhaps of the man, that Kellermann considered it necessary to issue a very naïve proclamation

to the army on this occasion, to explain that he had only drawn in his forces. Some ill-natured person, it would seem, had used the word 'retreat' to describe the operation just completed, and McClellan himself, when he made his 'strategic movement to the rear', was not more surprised at a similar description than Kellermann was, for, as he said, his soldiers had shown everywhere a truly Republican courage, and the enemy had lost more than the French. Most nations, however, have found with grief that, whenever they have fought and drawn in, no amount of explanation has ever prevented a malevolent enemy who seizes the ground thus relinquished from claiming a victory, and the retiring General has to solace himself by thoughts of the moral victory he has gained. When the news of Waterloo was brought to the Duchesse d'Angoulême, that much disillusioned lady took the messenger to a map and insisted on having the positions of the armies both before and after the battle pointed out to her: not until then did she accept the event as a victory. She had heard of so many victories that had landed the conqueror well to the rear. In Kellermann's case the enemy laughed at the proclamation and, sad to say, so did some of the officers of the army; but they, says Koch, were men who would have laughed at anything. Bonaparte in Paris disapproved of Kellermann's handling of the army, but the wisdom of the retreat, if we may so style it, was acknowledged by Berthier, Jomini, Costa de Beauregard (the Quartermaster-General of Colli's army), and Marmont.

I have referred to an interruption of the movement of De Wins on Savona which is worth recording to show the extraordinary jumble so frequently caused here, as on the Rhine, by the interposition of neutral territory in the field of operations of rival armies. The fortress of Savona belonged to Genoa, but the French wished to hold the citadel, while the Genoese naturally refused to allow even a joint occupation. Little attention is ever paid to the neutrality of small powers and, believing the Austrians might seize the place, Kellerman had ordered the difficulty to be solved by an assault. Laharpe, the General of Brigade entrusted with the operation, considering the attack to be hopeless, arranged instead with the Genoese commandant that, if the Allies attacked the French regiment he had placed in the *faubourg*, it should take shelter in the covered

way; that is, close to the outside of the main ditch of the place. The French believed or hoped that the arrangement involved, or might be made to involve, their admission to the citadel if they were pressed, and Dupuy, the Colonel of the regiment, was ordered to start each day after midnight and to place himself under Savona, on which he was to retire on the first attack of the enemy. On the 22nd June Colonel Dupuy carried out the first part of the programme, but no enemy arrived, so at 7 a.m. he began his return to Vado. Then at last the tardy foe appeared, but Dupuy did not quite play his part and, seeing that they had only taken post on the heights, he went back to his entrenchments. This did not suit Laharpe, so Dupuy was ordered at noon to start again and, without waiting to be attacked or pressed by the enemy, to form on the glacis of the place, sending a letter to the Governor to claim his protection. Dupuy accordingly drew close up to the citadel and passed the night there quietly. Next morning his outposts were really attacked, so he fell back inside the covered way, on the palisades of the fort, firing on the enemy. A good deal of confused shooting took place, for the enemy, seeing the French sheltered by the fort as they took it, fired on the garrison, and the troops of the garrison at one part of the front being Corsicans and sympathizers with the French, returned the Austrian fire, while on another front, held by deserters from the Austrians and commanded by an officer of that nation, the garrison fired on the French in much gusto. Roguet, from whom we have part of the story, and others were wounded, but at last the place ceased firing, and Dupuy, getting his men inside the palisades and part of the works, passed the time there fed by the Genoese garrison, until on the 26th June he and his regiment were brought by sea to Vado. If Kellermann had failed to get Savona, at least he had prevented the Austrians from taking it as they had intended, and the mention of the friendship of part of the garrison for the French seems to show that he may have had better reason for ordering an assault than Generals Freytag and Laharpe, who opposed the plan, believed. The real lesson of the incident is that, as the Spaniards were to learn in 1808, a neutral fort can never trust to any protection in war, but only to its own guns; and the commander who relies on the good faith of neutrals is a fool or worse.



Another incident, without result at the moment, had, I venture to think, a bad effect on the fortunes of Kellermann. The enemy had attacked the positions of Sérurier on the left bank of the Tanaro, but at first had been beaten off. Those of the French troops who were on the upper terraces of the rocks assisted as mere spectators of the onslaught on the positions below; not deigning to strike their tents, they remained seated as if on the benches of a theatre applauding the courage of the enemy. But the attacks were renewed, and on the 5th July Sérurier reported to Masséna that the Colle dei Termini, west of Monte Antoroto had been partly lost, and that the enemy had cut the retreat of his head-quarters at Ormea: Sérurier was therefore about to draw back with the rest of the division to the right or south of the Tanaro. This meant that the enemy had broken in at what we may call the north-eastern angle of the line and could now take the right wing in rear. On receipt of this message of disaster Kellermann at once assembled at Albenga a council of war, at which he, Berthier, Masséna, Laharpe, and other officers were present, to determine what line should be taken if Sérurier were driven over the Tanaro and the enemy held Ponte di Nava. The council determined that the line of San Remo should be taken, but that, if the Colle di Tanarello or the Colle di Tenda were forced, then the line still farther west at Ventimiglia should be held. Masséna, as commanding the wing interested, was to determine the intermediate positions to be taken up. All this was natural enough, and Berthier proceeded to draw up the necessary orders, but most unwisely, before any confirmation of the news from Sérurier could be obtained, a copy of the resolution of the Council, with a demand for reinforcement, was hurried off to the *Comité*. When this dispatch arrived at Paris the *Comité* were at a loss to know what to do, for they could not at that time take troops from the Rhine frontier, and the negotiations with Spain had not yet set free the two armies of the Pyrenees. While they were puzzling over the situation came a fresh dispatch: the despondent Sérurier had been too hasty, his troops, under Pelletier, had thrown back the enemy, so that, writing at six o'clock in the evening of the day on which he had given the alarm, he announced that the army was saved. Men in authority resent being unduly alarmed: indeed as the Council expressly said,

their resolution was only to be carried out fully if the Colle dei Termini were not retaken, and it is hard to see why Kellermann was in such haste to send the dispatch to Paris. Also, as will be seen, it had been intended to leave much to Masséna, and this was natural enough, for he was in command of the wing which had to move; indeed the Council practically was that of the chief officers of his wing, meeting in presence of Kellermann and Berthier. Still, this may have helped to represent Kellermann as not accepting the whole burden of command. The odd thing is that no blame fell on Sérurier, who actually rose in position. Kellermann had not been satisfied with the manner in which Garnier had commanded the left division and had managed the joint operations with the 'Alpes', and the *Comité* had placed that officer on the unemployed list. General Gaultier, Chief of the Staff to 'Italie', wrote to Berthier that he saw no one but Sérurier to command the left, but it would be difficult to replace him in his division of the right wing. On the 1st August Kellermann ordered Sérurier to go to Saint-Martin-Lantosque and take command of the left, where he worked well with the Armée des Alpes.

De Wins had counted a good deal on the co-operation of the English fleet and, when the French retired, he called on Vice-Admiral Hotham, commanding in the Mediterranean, for his support. Hotham accordingly sent Captain Nelson from Saint-Florent,<sup>1</sup> where the fleet lay, with his ship the *Agamemnon* and some smaller vessels; but Nelson, meeting with a French squadron, was chased back to Saint-Florent, and it was not till the 21st July that he anchored off Vado, now in possession of the Austrians. He had not sufficient force to stop the coast traffic completely, and matters were complicated by the fact that the neutral state of Genoa drew part of its supplies from ports in rear of the French, so that it was difficult to distinguish the real destination of any vessel. Nelson's favourite plan was to land a body of Austrians in the rear of the French, promising them a secure retreat to his ships if they should be forced in the position they were to fortify. This ought to have scored a success to Kellermann, who would have had sufficient resolution to throw himself on such a detachment (sure to be nervous about its security) and to crush it, so that De Wins was wise

<sup>1</sup> On the north-east coast of Corsica.

in not adopting the plan. Nelson believed that De Wins had no real intention of advancing, and that he meant to throw the blame for his inactivity on the Piedmontese and on the English fleet; and there were good grounds for such a belief, for little love was lost between De Wins and Colli. It has been asserted that the English fleet, if kept more constantly on the coast of the Riviera, might have so harassed the communications of the French as to have made the campaign of Bonaparte in 1796 impossible.<sup>1</sup> This, I think, is to misconceive the style of that commander, who would never have kept his army long by the coast and, once over the mountains and in the rich plains of Lombardy, the little he then required from France would have reached him over the passes farther north. As he himself says, 'The army was in want of everything, and could hope for nothing from France. It was from victory that it had to expect everything. It was only in the plains of Italy that it could organize its transport, horse its artillery, clothe its men, mount its cavalry.'<sup>2</sup> It is, however, a very enticing question what the effect might have been had any cause forced Bonaparte to act otherwise than from the Riviera, or had chance not connected him with the Armée d'Italie, but instead had sent him to the Armée des Alpes, within such a tempting distance from Turin. In that case he might have carried out in 1796 a movement such as that which led him in 1800 to Marengo.

Had Nelson's plan been tried, no doubt Masséna would have led the attack on the body thrown in rear of the army, and what more formidable foe could Nelson have found? In 1796 Masséna had acquired more experience of war, though even then he was perhaps a little dulled in ardour and was less active when not on the actual field than in 1795. An officer who served under him at this period describes him as hard on his men, but equally hard on himself; sober, bearing all fatigues, strongly constituted, with great strength of character, indefatigable, on horseback night and day along the steepest and most dreadful roads, however vile the weather; decided, brave, full of self-pride and ambition, obstinate to excess, never discouraged, he specially understood mountain warfare. This was not the man the English were to know in Spain, old, worn by fatigues, weighted

<sup>1</sup> Laughton, Sir J. K., *Nelson*, London, Macmillan, 1900. See pp. 72-3.

<sup>2</sup> *Corr. Nap.*, xxix. 83.



down by honours and rewards, sickened of war, following, not leading, his army to the ridge of Busaco, leaving reconnaissance to others, and only gathering for the old tiger-spring on the actual field of battle. Now he left nothing to others: were a position to be taken or a line occupied, nothing must be done till he himself had seen all. Ready to stand, he was still more anxious to strike. What perhaps is more remarkable than all is the haughty attitude he adopted towards the Powers so dreaded by all at that time. Neither Convention nor Representative was feared by him. I have already said how he spoke of the bloodthirsty *Tribunal révolutionnaire*. Once returning at night in fearful weather after an expedition whose failure he believed was due to a Representative, he told his staff, 'I am accustomed to death on fields of battle, I do not dread it on the scaffold. I am going to lose men, and perhaps again as uselessly, but still it is well worth while to begin again: let the responsibility be on others.' Still it was ever on the actual field that his fine talent seemed to leap to light. One is again a little inclined to wonder why Masséna was not given the command of the army, for he was certainly the foremost General with it. The spirit of the military hierarchy doubtless was against this, and Kellermann was a General of standing and reputation. But it was fortunate for the army that Masséna remained with its fighting wing, and he probably gained much in experience on the field without being crushed by the work of supplying the army—a work which absorbed so much of Kellermann's time and powers, and which under his successor tied the force to a desolate countryside until Bonaparte had the courage to make the great leap into plenty. Still Masséna was not merely the striking arm, the Stonewall Jackson of 'Italie': he was part of its brains, and he was consulted by Kellermann and by Schérer on each move and on each problem. All this went to make him the formidable commander of 1799-1800.

If Masséna seems to have got less than his deserts, Sérurier rose higher than a mere record of his achievements up to that date might seem to warrant, but, if not always fortunate in the field, he was a leader welcome to the troops that knew him, as well as to the inhabitants of his district: besides, he had tact enough to fit him for the somewhat difficult task of conducting the operations in that area where 'Italie' was linked with

'Alpes', for it must always be remembered that Kellermann wielded both armies. No better proof of Sérurier's worth can be given than the fact that even after his over-haste in reporting wrongly a defeat which would have thrown back the whole army, he was practically promoted, receiving the command of the left wing. In September we shall find the Representative Beffroy describing him as 'one of the most senior and best Generals of the Republic'. Kellermann also had high praise for him. On the night of the 31st August a body of the enemy under an *émigré*, the chevalier Bonnaud, attacked Sérurier's head-quarters at San Martin Lantosque, but made the mistake of surrounding the place instead of bursting in. Collecting his men, only 318 in number, Sérurier carried on the struggle till six the next morning, when he beat off his assailants and took many in the pursuit. Bonnaud in despair blew out his own brains. Kellermann thought the report of Sérurier, who had made two prisoners with his own hands, was not explicit enough, and wrote to the *Comité*: 'I must speak to you of the distinguished manner in which General Sérurier conducted himself. It is to the coolness and courage of this excellent officer that was due the success of this glorious day, in which he succeeded in beating the conquering enemy, who had already penetrated into his head-quarters.' One satisfactory incident of this affair was that the *Comité*, consulted as to the fate of eighty-six captured deserters, replied that it would be inhuman to kill them, and an examination should be made to see if some could not be amnestied. We are already far from 1794.

As for Lieut.-Colonel Suchet, whose volunteer battalion, the 4th Ardèche, still remained one of the few in the army not yet amalgamated with the regulars, we know practically nothing of him at this period, except that in the recent affairs his battalion had been in the brigade of the fine fighting General, Laharpe, part of Freytag's division of the right wing, which Masséna commanded. Laharpe had commanded the extreme right on the coast, and had beaten off De Wins just where the Austrian had intended to break through, so Suchet had had the best of training. Lieut.-Colonel and Adjutant-General Joubert we have seen picked out to command a desperate venture. Then by one of the freaks of the War Office or of the *Comité*, he was placed on the unemployed list, perhaps because he had not been successful,

for General Cervoni, under whom he had fought, was treated similarly. However, Kellermann ordered him to await the answer of the *Comité* to his remonstrances, and in the end Joubert was not only retained, but was made Colonel. Duroc was still Second-Captain in the artillery. Great opportunities for winning distinction were given by the frequent affairs fought, even in grand operations, by small parties on the hills, and the men, often formed in new regiments and long unsettled by revolutionary manias, required leading and personal example more than in later years. That the officers should engage was shown by the issue of muskets to Lieutenants and to *sous-lieutenants*. The officers did not like this; on the other hand they got the promise of four *sous* a day, while Captains were to get six, but they received nothing of this.

It would be tedious to go into Kellermann's plans for the advance which he hoped to make as soon as reinforcements arrived, and there is some difficulty in settling which project is to be attributed to him. I think it certain that he always meant to debouch by the Tanaro valley, first taking in reverse the Sardinian posts on the steep slopes there, and then swinging round on the back of the Austrian positions on the southern slopes of the Apennines, in order to crush them against the sea. This would have separated the forces of the two nations confronting the army, and promised a decisive result, but when the plan was submitted to the *Comité* that body substituted another of its own, in which the order of the movements was reversed: the first stroke was to be dealt on the Austrians, so that success there would have driven them on to, not away from, their allies. This plan of the *Comité*, if not of Bonaparte, went far: Ceva was to be besieged and taken and, if possible, so were Demonte and Alessandria. In the next campaign, in January or February 1796, the army was to cross the gorges of Trent and the mountains of Tyrol. Kellermann criticized this plan, and one of his remarks deserves attention. The next campaign, he said, would depend on the reinforcements the *Comité* might send; with 100,000 *disposable men* the Austrians could be chased from Italy, and Piedmont be occupied. This calculation was not far out, for in April 1796, when Bonaparte advanced with 'Italie', he had 96,951 men on his rolls. Of course large deductions must be made from that number to get his



actual strength in the field: 24,427 were in hospital, 21,639 were left in the coast divisions, 3,604 were only *en route* to join, and so on; but many of such deductions must also have been anticipated by Kellermann. If we deduct from Bonaparte's total half the extraordinary number of sick and all the men shown as embarked (2,222), we get a strength for 'Italie' of about 82,000. To these must be added the Armée des Alpes, for Kellermann, Generalissimo of both forces, would include it, and part of its troops were almost immediately sent to the support of Bonaparte after his advance. We thus get a total of 106,000 men, so that Kellermann did not speak at random. If we take Kellermann's paper strength in July 1795 he had 31,193 men in 'Italie' and 17,108 in 'Alpes', making a nominal total of 48,301, from which deductions similar to those in Bonaparte's force must be made. In April 1796 Bonaparte, after deductions, had 38,175 in his active army; while in July 1795 Kellermann counted 19,524 as his active force in 'Italie'. The 'Alpes' was probably then in much the same state as in September 1795, when it had hardly 12,000 men under arms, and that included the garrison of Briançon and of other places. I give these details while I also, with great diffidence, attempt to describe Kellermann's plans, because I am more concerned with his intellectual calibre than with his actual performances.

At no time, not even in the Valmy campaign, did Kellermann's conduct stand higher than now. Active, resolute, not to say obstinate, stiff in manners as in mind, he was modest enough to bear discussion and even contradiction of his plans. He had sought advice often enough of Masséna, and especially of Sérurier, no doubt because that General knew much of the Tanaro valley in which Kellermann hoped to advance. He had trusted much, perhaps too much, to his line of works, but although he had often represented them as impregnable and had declared that he would hold them, yet when they were pierced, not entirely from the defects of his plan, he was ready at once to acknowledge the necessity for withdrawal; and the retreat was conducted skilfully enough. Rough and outspoken himself, he was never offended by Masséna's free tongue, and all attempts to embroil the two failed. Although he had done well with the 'Alpes' in 1793, he may not have had the cautious daring required by mountain warfare but, had the chance

been given him, he would probably have struck heavily and directly.

If not a great General, Kellermann was an honest, single-hearted man and a good organizer; he threw himself into the work of feeding and supplying his starving men, for famine was more dangerous and almost more successful a foe than De Wins. The troops were in a state of the greatest misery, for the work of supply, always difficult here, had become harder now that the right no longer communicated with Voltri and with Genoa. Roguet says the troops abandoned to the Government three years of the pay due to them, but it is hard to see what likelihood they had of getting either arrears or the current amount. The pestilent English blockaded the coast and too often prevented the arrival of supplies by sea; but Kellermann did all that energy and eloquence could do to get food from the merchants of Genoa or elsewhere, and when the shaky credit of the French Government failed, he staked his own for the good of the men, who thus received a scanty yet welcome supply of food and of shoes: indeed, in this part of his work he seems to have been more alert and certainly more successful than Masséna was to be in 1800. With all this, however, the army might have had to withdraw to the Var famine-stricken (going off like so many thieves, as Masséna chose to put it, without orders) if it had not been for some Greek vessels laden with corn from Spain, which escaped the notice of the English and, anchoring off the coast, were induced by Kellermann to enter the port of Alassio and to furnish supplies to his army. This enabled him to wait for more regular issues. When the men paraded to hear the new constitution of *An III* read out by a gaily dressed Representative, they cried, 'We understand nothing about your constitutions: give us food and let us see the enemy.'

However, Kellermann's difficulties seemed at last to be drawing to an end, for peace with Spain, concluded at Bâle on the 22nd July, set free the troops hitherto fighting the Spaniards, and most of 'Pyrénées Orientales' and part of 'Pyrénées Occidentales' were ordered to join 'Italie'. At the same time the Representatives at Lyons were urged to send to the frontier some of the corps of 5,000 men which had arrived at Bourg from the Rhine early in July, and which by the usual evil practice had been diverted by the Representatives to keep down

Lyons. Most of these men were sent to the Armée des Alpes at the Camp de Tournoux, where they set free others to join 'Italie'. Another corps of 10,000 from the 'Rhin-et-Moselle' reached Bourg at the end of August, but the greater part of these was diverted or joined the Armée des Alpes, so that 'Italie' got altogether from the Rhine only from 5,000 to 6,000 infantry and also 2,000 cavalry. The latter had to be echeloned in the Rhône valley for forage. Going to Tournoux to arrange for the arrival of these reinforcements, Kellermann himself was in some danger from the Barbets or armed peasantry at Scarena,<sup>1</sup> where these bands had nearly killed Salicetti in the previous year. In fact throughout these campaigns, as in 1800, the army suffered much from the Austrian system of raising levies amongst the peasants, for the inhabitants here, as on the Rhine, were strongly opposed to the apostles of Liberty. The atrocities these bands committed on their prisoners were a fertile source of correspondence and of ill-feeling between the commanders on both sides. As I have already explained,<sup>2</sup> the hope of obtaining about 16,000 men from 'Pyrénées Occidentales' was not fulfilled, for the first three columns, under Victor, were detained for long on their way, and the Representatives took the cavalry to keep down Marseilles and part of the infantry to keep down Avignon. Kellermann, believing this delay at Avignon to be the fault of Victor, complained to the *Comité*, who ordered that Victor should be punished by an arrest for a month, but this sentence was remitted on explanation of the real cause. Then two cavalry regiments and thirty-four battalions, in four divisions some 10,000 strong under Charlot, Menard, Guillot, and Augereau, were to follow from 'Pyrénées Orientales', but here again the Representatives intervened, keeping some in the Pyrenees, others at Marseilles and at Avignon. In the end Victor's columns joined at the end of September, and the rest only in October. In all the columns desertion had raged, and the hardships of their last campaign and of their march sent a mass of men into hospital, so that less than half of the men from Spain reached the right wing of 'Italie'. Yet, however small the reinforcements might be compared to what he had expected, Kellermann could now hope to reap the reward of his labours and to descend into the plains of Italy. The food supply of the army

<sup>1</sup> Scarena or l'Escarène.

<sup>2</sup> In Chapter XII.



was by some miracle assured for two or three months, though forage hardly existed, and articles of clothing, even breeches and especially boots, were such rare possessions amongst the men, that those who were to stay in camp lent their boots to those sent on detachment. But the Republican armies were accustomed to do without such luxuries. Now came the bitterest disappointment of Kellermann's life: all his labour, as far as he was concerned, had been in vain and, even while he had been proposing his plan and the *Comité* had been considering it, they were intending to relieve him. On the 31st August they nominated Schérer, lately commanding 'Pyrénées Orientales' to command the Armée d'Italie, restricting Kellermann to the Armée des Alpes. At the first glance the appointment of Schérer might seem natural enough, for he came with the prestige of success against the Spaniards and was supposed to bring with him the mass of his army. In reality he had done little at the head of 'Pyrénées Orientales' but waste his men in the marshes of the Ampurdan and, instead of bringing an army, he brought at most a division. It was a bitter task for Kellermann to transfer the command of the army he had prepared, just when it was fit to advance: it was hard to be relegated to what was little more than an auxiliary or reserve. Many men in his place would have resigned, but he had had severe experience of the resentment of governments, and he was a patriotic and devoted soldier. With tears in his eyes he gave over his command to Schérer at Nice on the 29th and 30th September, and next day proceeded to his modest charge, taking with him his Chief of the Staff, General of Brigade Berthier.

Some circumstances of Kellermann's position at the moment may possibly account for the apparently unreasonable manner in which he was now relegated to the inferior command of the 'Alpes'. Part of his command was Lyons. Now in the summer of 1795 it was a favourite scheme of the Royalists to try to establish in France some point of local resistance to the Government at Paris, round which point they hoped the country would gather in time, and Lyons was chosen for this purpose. Full details of the scheme will be found in the Correspondence of Wickham,<sup>1</sup> so valuable for much of this period. De Wins and the Piedmontese might, it was thought, be induced to strike

<sup>1</sup> Wickham, i. 108-29.

through Savoy, and then the inhabitants of Lyons might be excited to take up arms again. An attempt was also to be made on Franche Comté. When De Wins appeared on the top of Mont Cenis an invasion was to be attempted from the Upper Rhine by Wurmser with his Austrian army, at the head of which was to have marched the corps of *émigrés* of the Prince de Condé, in hopes that the people would declare in favour of the King. The plot went far, and Pichegru was to some extent implicated. The idea of forming a provincial point of resistance to the Government probably was a mistaken one, because it did not allow for the centralized character of the new Government and, one might say, of the French character. Still, a great deal of dissatisfaction existed all over the country, which was kept under only by force for years to come, but which showed itself in joy on the establishment of the Consulate. Royalist and English agents were spread all over the country, and the movement or plan really was an important one. The widespread correspondence could not exist between all the agents in and outside the country without raising at least some suspicions. There may have been treachery amongst the conspirators, and it is uncertain whether Pichegru, for instance, may not have played a double game, giving sufficient information to the Government to make them believe he was favourable to them, but also withholding from them facts that might have enabled them to act. (Colonel Craufurd's excellent letter of the 12th February 1797 should be read in this context.<sup>1</sup>) In the letters of the conspirators the names of Generals whom it was hoped to corrupt would often occur and, when such letters fell into the hands of the Government, suspicions would be aroused which they might not always think it safe to make public, or to act on avowedly. Now Kellermann's name was sure to be mentioned. On the 24th June 1795 Wickham writes that Pichegru considers it important to communicate with Sériziat, commander of the National Guard of Lyons, 'First because that officer is personally connected with Kellermann, who was certainly well disposed to have assisted the people of Lyons on the former occasion' (that is, before the siege), 'if circumstances would have permitted him.'<sup>2</sup> Again on the 26th June Colonel Craufurd tells Wickham that Pichegru 'presses strongly the point about Keller-

<sup>1</sup> Wickham, i. 274, 279.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 100.

mann, which he considers as very essential'.<sup>1</sup> Lyons was always giving trouble, and it must have been almost impossible to escape accusations of treachery either for using or not using such a town as one of the natural bases and points of supply of the army. The difficulties which prevented Kellermann from moving also exposed him to the attacks of the patriots at the capital, and so late as December 1795 he was denounced in the *Journal des Hommes Libres* for maintaining correspondence with the enemies of the Republic at Turin. Even his friendship for Berthier may have recalled memories of the charges against that officer in 1792, when he was removed from the Armée du Centre just before Valmy. Thus there must have been just enough doubt of his good faith in the mind of the Government to cause his removal from the more important command, but yet not enough for his complete disgrace. This, however, is a mere surmise of my own, and presents obvious difficulties, because the transfer brought him nearer to the danger point, but it is well, in considering the position both of 'Alpes' and 'Italie' at this period to remember the mass of seething discontent which was behind them, and which called off from them troops much required at the front. An 'Armée du Midi' still existed in some form, and Moncey also in his command at Bayonne had troops in the South. Still, for whatever reason the change was made, it cannot be said that the Armée d'Italie gained by it, for it will be seen that, when his successor struck the enemy, it was on the coast, and there is every reason to believe that Kellermann, striking northwards, would have done more with the large force entrusted to Schérer, who was to show in 1799 how inferior a commander he was, by losing almost all Bonaparte's conquests in Italy.

Arriving at Gap on the 8th October, Kellermann took over command of the 'Alpes' from General Moulin, who retired for a time to Paris owing to ill-health. With his usual self-abnegation Kellermann now set himself to the task of supporting the expected advance of 'Italie'. His own army was in a difficult situation for want of funds, for much speculation had caused the ruin of its transport and had made all supply difficult. Still, he did not yet despair of playing a part in the next campaign, for it was evident from the growing strength of 'Italie' that an

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., 104.



important advance would be attempted. Probably none of the Generals on the spot dreamt of disregarding the fortresses and of pressing on for Milan, as Bonaparte was to do in the next year. To cross the mountains and to besiege the fortresses, preparatory to a campaign in the next summer, would have been thought success enough, but even that moderate hope was not fulfilled.

Berthier had come unwillingly. In their order separating the two armies, the *Comité* had intended that he should remain with 'Italie' temporarily, to make Schérer fully acquainted with the situation, and Berthier himself had wished to stay, but naturally this did not suit Kellermann, who insisted on Berthier's going with him to 'Alpes', and considered that the two days which they had passed with Schérer were sufficient. Schérer had appreciated Berthier, and had made him promise to get leave from Kellermann to return for the attack which the army was about to make. Berthier, who was corresponding with Clarke, then employed in the War Office at Paris, hoped to get an order from the *Comité* to remain with 'Italie' till the attack should be delivered. No order, however, came and, when on the 19th October Berthier asked Kellermann's permission for leave of absence to join Schérer for a time, Kellermann refused on the ground that the *Comité* had not ordered this move and that Schérer had not made any official application for Berthier's services, a thing Schérer could hardly have done without depreciating his own staff, if not himself also. Berthier, however, sent Schérer all the information he thought useful, and it is to be noted that in his correspondence with Clarke he continued to give his ideas and plans for the operations of the two armies. In all probability these ideas were communicated to Bonaparte in Paris, who from the 30th August to the 15th September had been one of four Generals entrusted with the preparation of the forthcoming operations. And Bonaparte was about to become a prominent person at the capital. On the 4th October, as Second-in-Command of the Armée de l'Intérieur, he crushed the Sections of Paris and on the 5th became the Commander-in-Chief of the army. He had no official connexion now with 'Italie', but his mind was centred on it: the charger was ready, and from Paris the rider looked longingly at the saddle he hoped to fill. A short time before, a mission to Turkey would have pleased him: now he flew at higher game.

## XV

### SCHÉRER

(September 1795 to March 1796)

The 'Italie' group of future Marshals now complete. Battle of Loano. Criticism of Schérer. Destitution of the army. Bonaparte appointed to command.

#### CONTEMPORARY EVENTS

- 1795 5th October. Insurrection of 13th Vendémiaire suppressed.  
26th October. The Directory established.  
October. French armies retreat from the Rhine.  
1796 10th January–20th May. Armistice on the Rhine.

THE Armée d'Italie now became more what it was to be under Bonaparte, for with Schérer came General of Division Augereau, Colonel Lannes, commanding the 105th regiment in the division of Augereau, and Captain Bessières in a cavalry regiment. All these joined 'Italie' for the first time; and with them came General of Brigade Victor, who had belonged to 'Italie', but who had left it with Dugommier after the capture of Toulon: he at first joined the division of Masséna, but was soon transferred to that of Augereau. The arrival of Augereau altered a little the position of Masséna, who had hitherto been so prominent among the Generals of Division, and now he and Augereau may be said to have been almost equal, although I take it that Masséna was still leading. The army was now regularly organized in divisions and brigades, under commanders intended to hold their posts permanently. This was a new arrangement, and one cannot but suspect it to have originated from some plan of Berthier's. I give the strength of the divisions, because they are some guide to the standing of their commanders. On the right, the post hitherto held by Masséna, Augereau had 6,961 men, consisting of the troops from the Pyrenees. Here Colonel Lannes was at the head of the 105th Regiment in Banel's brigade, and Victor commanded another brigade. In the centre Masséna had the divisions of Charlet (where Colonel Joubert was Adjutant-General), Laharpe, and the reserve under Bizanet, altogether 13,276 men. In this body was the battalion of Lieut.-

Colonel Suchet, now styled the 8th provisoire. On the left Sérurier had 5,155 men, so that the strength of the army, apparently not including artillery or cavalry, was 25,392 men. Second-Captain Duroc was, I presume, with the artillery of one or other division, and Captain Bessières with the 22nd Chasseurs somewhere in rear.

Schérer approved of Kellermann's plan for an advance down the Tanaro, but the two Generals had agreed that this should not be attempted until all the reinforcements had joined; and then, absorbed in questions of supply and possibly hampered by the departure of Berthier, Schérer put off the operation until, just when he was ready, a heavy fall of snow made it impossible. Still anxious to do something before winter, he adopted a plan proposed by Masséna, the general idea of which was as follows: while Sérurier on the left kept the enemy in front of him in check by a series of attacks and by a threat on Calizzano (covering in this way the northern line and the left of Masséna), Masséna himself was first to cut the connexion between the Austrian forces lying to the north-east and those by the coast; and then was to turn eastwards and march for the coast to crush the enemy's right, which was also to be attacked by Augereau.

Some days of preparation were required in which to bring up the troops for the main attack by Masséna, but this was done under the pretext of taking up cantonments in the Riviera for the winter, a device that readily imposed on the enemy, because De Wins himself was preparing to take up winter quarters. This was an awkward moment for a change in the command, but De Wins fell ill and on the 22nd November Wallis succeeded him. On the same day Sérurier duly attacked Colli on both banks of the Tanaro. The struggle was fiercest at the Colle di San Bernardo, where Sérurier himself led the assault on the works of the enemy. His troops were beaten off in disorder, but he rallied them and he remained in front till next day, having covered Masséna's operations to the full satisfaction of Schérer, who assured him that with his few troops he had done all that was in his power: 'C'est tout ce que je voulais.' The battle depended on Masséna, who had to cut the Austrians in two, separating d'Argenteau in his front, on the crest of the range, from Wallis down by the coast. On the 21st November he



issued an order of the day to his troops, in which he said that the division from the Pyrenees, which was to manœuvre on their right, would observe what they did, in order to judge them. He trusted in the 'énergie républicaine' of his old regiments, and forbade them to make use of their cartridges in the attack: the soldiers of the Army of Italy were to sharpen their bayonets and attack boldly. Starting at 4 a.m. on the 22nd November, Masséna attacked the enemy's positions on the ridge to the east and rather to the south of San Bernardo. Charlet, leading a division, was killed, but Masséna took his place and brought up his reserve. The first works were taken to shouts of, 'Vive la République! Vive Masséna!' Next Masséna threw his men on Rocca Barbena, which resisted for some time till its defenders drew back to Bardineto. There two hours later Masséna attacked them at the head of Charlet's late division. Seeing they might be turned, the enemy retired down the Western Bormida for Calizzano. It was in these operations that Suchet is described by Pelleport as covering himself with glory at the head of his battalion by taking the almost inaccessible heights of Monte Carmo (or Calvo). A signal had been made to Schérer on the coast to tell him of the capture of Rocca Barbena. The enemy had gone off in disorder, and, although the fighting over the mountains had scattered Masséna's troops, he left a force (which included Suchet's battalion) at Bardineto, to hold the positions, and himself raced north, with what men he could collect, for Melogno and Settepani, hoping to forestall d'Argenteau, who had a shorter distance to go. By eleven at night he met Cervoni's brigade at Melogno, and at midnight he set out again with a small body for the heights of San Pantaleone above Finale, to take in rear the force which Augereau was attacking on the coast.

While Masséna's fires, seen from below through the gloom, sparkled as if he was burning his way along the ridges, Augereau and his division from the Pyrenees worked along the coast under the eye of Schérer against the Austrians of Wallis. According to the general plan one would have thought that Augereau would have been kept on the curb by Schérer until Masséna was so far advanced as to be able to strike at the enemy's rear: till then, the farther he drove back the enemy, the better for them, because they would be the more able to escape; while,

were Masséna beaten, the rear of Augereau would have been quite as much exposed as it was hoped that that of Wallis would be. However, the critics are satisfied with what was done, which seems to me to have been to force Wallis back when he had better have been tied to his positions; and to leave him free when he should have been hard pressed and closely followed up. Before daybreak on the 22nd November, while a small French flotilla protected his right flank, Augereau threw himself on the enemy as if the success of the day depended on his defeating them as early as possible. His division was formed in four brigades, under Banel, Rusca, Victor, and Dommartin. The lines of the enemy at Loano were defended by works and masked by batteries in olive gardens, three fortified mounds, and the Chartreuse of Toirano, covering the Bardineto valley, by which the Austrians communicated with d'Argenteau. Banel swept through Toirano; but then, attacking the Chartreuse, he received what Augereau styled a slight wound, and handed over his brigade to Colonel Lannes, who, according to Augereau's report, 'executed perfectly all the movements entrusted to General Banel, and conducted himself with as much intelligence as bravery. This officer has deserved the greatest praise and the gratitude of the Nation'. Meanwhile Rusca was pushing forward to meet Lannes towards San Pietro and, because he had failed to take the battery called the Greater Castellaro, Victor was left to cover his flank. Now, while the French seemed to be carrying everything before them, came one of those sudden incidents in mountain warfare which try the steadfastness of soldiers and the self-possession of Generals. Banel's column had taken the battery in front of the Chartreuse and had driven General Ternay into the Chartreuse itself. Ternay was now reinforced and suddenly dashed out and retook the battery, and marched to cut his way by Toirano to Borghetto. In reality he had been enabled to do this by the arrival of some of the troops driven by Masséna from the heights above, but Schérer may not have understood this at the moment and may have been misled into thinking that Masséna had failed to cut the connexion. Anyhow Augereau, hearing a fresh storm of fire break out in his rear, sent back Dommartin's brigade, which drove back Ternay into the Chartreuse. There later in the day, hearing only of defeat on

every side, Ternay surrendered to a force hardly strong enough to guard the prisoners it had taken.

Here, as in Masséna's operations above, posts of the enemy were in several cases surrounded and isolated, so that the defenders were captured; but the same result was not always obtained. Victor's brigade, which had had some trouble with the enemy's cavalry, was all this time watching the Greater Castellaro, now completely isolated. Augereau summoned General Rukavina, who held the work with a thousand men, but Rukavina refused to surrender. Then, when the summons became sterner, Rukavina, smiling down from the parapet, pointed to the spot where Victor stood at the foot of the slope, with his brigade in column. 'There,' said the Austrian, 'is where I mean to pass,' and without further ado he came out sword in hand, with his men in close column, and cut his way clear through Victor's brigade. Victor's men were staggered by the shock, but at the word of their General they formed alongside and threw in a telling fire on the little column, which passed undismayed under the thunder of the batteries now occupied by the French, and rejoined Wallis with the loss of half its strength. Astonished and mortified as the French were, they yet rendered full justice to the gallantry of their foe. This exploit shows, as Soult would have said, from what desperate straits a cool and brave man can extricate himself.<sup>1</sup>

By four in the afternoon Schérer had learnt from the signal given by Masséna that Rocca-Barbena and Bardineto had been taken, but he knew nothing of the further progress of his centre, and he ordered the troops of Augereau to bivouac on their positions, more, it would seem, from fear of compromising Augereau, if Masséna were defeated, than from any wish to keep Wallis on his ground till Masséna could work round in his rear. The unfortunate De Wins had been removed in a litter from Pietra and had passed through troops murmuring against him and accusing him of their defeat. Meanwhile Wallis knew nothing of the result of Masséna's blows on his right, and had sent orders to d'Argenteau to fall back on Monte Settepani and Melogno. He himself intended to stand his ground next day. His messenger had been taken by Pijon (who had been pushed out by Masséna), and in the night he learnt of the disaster to

<sup>1</sup> Phipps, ii. 346.



his right, and fell back to what the French call the San Pantaleone heights, more easily identified on the map as the spur running down from Monte Settepani by Monte Colerina and Gorra to Finale Borgo, where he waited to remake his connexion with d'Argenteau, not knowing that his right had been driven off into the Bormida valley.

At daybreak on the 24th November Masséna could see Wallis and his Austrians drawn up on the spur running down to the sea by Finale, in occupation of the strong position which Schérer said they ought to have held at the first. He himself at the time had only some 2,000 men, and he therefore hurried up Laharpe's troops from above; meanwhile he tried to communicate with Schérer, whom he believed to be near. At last a peasant was found hidden in a cabin with his family, and the poor wretch was given the choice of seeing his wife and children shot, or winning four pieces of gold, if he brought back an answer from Schérer in four or five hours. The peasant had to go round to Borghetto by Bardineto, and Schérer did not get the letter till noon. Meantime Laharpe had sent up reinforcements, but had by mistake kept part of the reserve, so that Masséna by noon had not more than 4,300 men. Nevertheless he kept up pressure on the enemy and his presence was so threatening that Wallis sent off his artillery, which by a curious irony of fate fell into the hands of the French. De Wins had taken the trouble to make the road from Finale by San Giacomo practicable for carriages, and the convoy took this route, but at the Colle di San Giacomo it was attacked by Colonel and Adjutant-General Joubert, pushed out by Masséna. Cutting the traces of the teams, the Austrians fled and left to the French nineteen guns and the train, a most unfortunate result of road-improving. As for the main forces, the rest of the day passed in mere skirmishes and manœuvres. At night Wallis began his retreat, and on the morning of the 24th November Augereau advanced in two columns, one of which was under Colonel Lannes and moved by the sea, always covered by a French flotilla, while Masséna also moved forward along the hills. Rendering his guns unserviceable, Wallis retired and reaching Savona in the afternoon of the 25th. At last he fully realized the extent of the catastrophe to his right, and marched by Montenotte for Acqui, which he reached on the 29th. His rear-guard, under the brave

Rukavina, held longer, but then drew off by Altare and Carcare, and reached Dego on the 28th. Want of food prevented Masséna and Augereau from pursuing for more than a very short distance from Savona. Altogether Loano cost the Austrians five colours, forty-eight guns (not including seventeen left in Vado), 3,500 killed or wounded, and 4,000 prisoners, including 200 officers. The French give their loss as 500 killed and from 1,150 to 1,200 wounded. General Charlet had died from his wounds.

It will be remarked that, for the purposes of this battle, the French held the advantage of the command of the sea and used their flotilla. The question of whether this could have been prevented by the English is considered by Mahan, certainly no unfriendly critic of our Navy. 'Did, then,' he asks, 'the British Navy under all these circumstances do all that it could have done to insure the success of the common cause? The answer can scarcely be "Yes".' He goes on to say that, though Nelson did his best, sufficient force was not granted him, although it was available. Five years later Nelson wrote to Lord Keith, 'You will now bear me out in my assertion, when I say that the British fleet could have prevented the invasion of Italy and, if our friend Hotham had kept his fleet on that coast, I assert, and you will agree with me, no army from France could have been furnished with stores or provisions: even men could not have marched.' This only refers to the route actually adopted by Schérer in 1795 and by Bonaparte in 1796. If the Army of Italy could not have advanced (and it had the Tanaro route open to it), even Nelson could not have stopped the Armée des Alpes, which now remained drained and inactive, under Kellermann, but which could then have been reinforced from 'Italie' and could have poured into Italy by a shorter route. Nelson wrote on the 6th June 1800: on the 14th June the fate of Italy was settled at Marengo by an army whose march no fleet could have affected.

Schérer, in his 'Reflections' on Loano, considered that it might be classed amongst the great battles which had honoured the French armies in this memorable war, and he went on to point out, much in the spirit of Saint-Cyr, various mistakes he believed the enemy to have made. He was apparently fully satisfied with himself and with the manœuvres 'savantes et

hardies' of the Generals. Still, I think, it will be seen that there is something to be said for my criticism on him. Wallis, if I read him rightly, says that he himself retired on the 23rd November, without having received any news from d'Argenteau and on account of the attempt of Schérer and Augereau to turn his right flank.<sup>1</sup> Consequently I assume that, if he had not been so hard pressed that day, he would have held his ground for at least that night. It was not from news sent by d'Argenteau, but from the sight of Masséna's troops in his rear that, on arriving at his position, he understood that d'Argenteau had met with disaster and that his right wing had gone off for Piémont. If daybreak on the 24th had found him at Loano, realizing by that time something of the situation, Schérer could have delayed his retreat by attacking, while precious hours would have been won for the arrival of Masséna in the rear of the enemy. Instead of that, Schérer was engaged all the 24th in trying to drive the Austrians back to a position which he considered that they should have taken up at first, and which was stronger than that which they actually held. Moreover, he would have given them time to establish themselves there, if Masséna had failed. Surely also Schérer was exposing Augereau by the advance, for what would have been the position of the right wing, if, instead of the broken fugitives who, joining Ternay at the Chartreuse, enabled him to take the offensive for a moment, a victorious body had swept down from the mountains in the flank or rear of Augereau? What makes Schérer's conduct still more curious is that, even after the battle, in writing to the Directory he seems to have regretted not having been able to carry out the first plan, that of Kellermann, by which, as he said, after the Piedmontese should have been driven into the Tanaro, the Austrians would have been thrown into the plain of Loano where they would have had to lay down their arms. Yet he seems to have done his best to drive them out of the plain on to the hills. Indeed, one might be allowed to believe that the victory was far from a complete gain to the French, although it brought them up once more to Genoa and thus made supply easier. And, if the battle had not been fought, and Bonaparte

<sup>1</sup> Krebs-Moris, ii, *Pièces justificatives*, 351. I think the context shows that the columns he here refers to must have been Augereau's, as Masséna, far away, could not have 'profited by the moment'.



had found the Austrians in the position they occupied before it, we can dream of the glorious stroke he would most probably have made on their centre by the Tanaro valley, letting Wallis advance westwards at his pleasure. He would probably have got greater results than he did from the position of 1796, in which Schérer had forced the enemy to improve their front.

Although Schérer's conduct in throwing himself on the left of the Austrians seems strange, he quite understood the opportunity his victory at Loano gave him elsewhere, and he intended to detach 12,000 men to support, by a flank attack, an advance to be made by Sérurier on the left down the Tanaro for Ceva, and thus he hoped to crush the Piedmontese of Colli. Then came in the eternal question of food and, after placing Joubert in command of the 2,000 or 3,000 men left by Masséna at Rocca Barbena, Bardinetto, and other places, he found he could send only some 3,000 or 4,000 men under Menard to support Sérurier. Colli, knowing of d'Argenteau's defeat, yet ignorant of the fate of Wallis, had held his ground, but, when on the night of the 27th November the French advanced, he abandoned the strong positions at San Bernardo and other places, which had halted Sérurier before. While Joubert and Menard prepared to assault Monte Spinarda, Sérurier with his main column, disregarding any bodies on his flanks, marched straight down the Tanaro, and, throwing the enemy into Ceva, did not halt till within three miles of the entrenched camp there. This caused much alarm amongst the troops holding it, and indeed on the 30th, when the other columns concentrated round the post, the invasion of Piedmont could have followed, had not famine halted the French. The army was now in a state in which, if it could not advance, it could not hold its ground, and Sérurier had to draw back up the Tanaro. The advance had been so rapid that Joubert declared he had lost Aides-de-camp, servants, and horses, and was on foot, with all he possessed left behind him. The enemy had lost from 500 killed and wounded, 600 prisoners, and 5 guns, while the French acknowledged only 50 killed and 200 wounded.

If we take the whole of these operations of November 1795, it will be seen that each of the men with whom we are concerned had had his triumph. Masséna was the real hero, for to his energy the victory was due. His back-stroke at Wallis was a

faint foreshadowing of that at Suvaroff in 1799. Augereau had done well in attacking a very strong position, described by Schérer, who by this time had seen a good deal of war, in the words, 'Jamais champ de bataille plus bizarre ne fût donné à une armée'. General of Brigade Victor had had, it is true, a mortifying experience, but his brigade had stood well and had beaten off the enemy's cavalry, an arm of which neither the troops of 'Italie' nor of 'Pyénées' had yet had much experience. As for Colonel Lannes, unfortunately Augereau does not seem to have recommended him officially for promotion, which otherwise he would probably have got; but it will be seen that Napoleon was mistaken when at St. Helena he said he had found Lannes as a Lieut.-Colonel. Lieut.-Colonel Suchet, as I have already said, is described as covering himself with glory in capturing Monte Carmo. Joubert, who had done so well, was on Masséna's recommendation promoted General of Brigade, although Joubert himself, worn and doubting whether he could retain his health, required much pressure from the Generals and the Representative Ritter to make him accept. Captain Bessières must have been with the cavalry and their starving horses in the Rhône valley. Of Captain Duroc we hear nothing. As for Sérurier, who had fought away from the rest of our group, he had been beaten back at first, but in keeping the Piedmontese quiet, whether or not they were superior in force to him, he had achieved his main object. Afterwards he had had ample revenge. There was one great difference between him and two other men, Masséna and Suchet: except in the short passage of the mountains in 1796, he was to have nothing more to do with this district, whilst the knowledge which the others were gaining of the ground was to be most useful to them in 1799, when Suchet commanded a wing of Masséna's army in this theatre.

As a mark of satisfaction, Schérer gave Masséna the command of the *avant-garde*, some 13,000 to 14,000 strong, composed of two divisions, Laharpe and Meynier (the latter succeeding Charlet, killed), which held Savona and the crest of the Apennines from San Giacomo to Melogno. On his left Augereau guarded the gorges of the Bormida; Sérurier held the Tanaro valley, Macquard the Colli di Tenda; and Garnier closed the line on the extreme left. However, a fall of snow now sent the enemy into winter quarters, and the troops, as far as possible, were

brought down into the towns of the Riviera. Suchet's battalion came down on the 15th December from Bardinetto to Toirano, the 'joli village', which had been so fought for on the 23rd November. 'Here' says Koch, 'began a fresh series of calamities for the Armée d'Italie.' The spoils of Loano had enabled Schérer to pay the men, probably much to their astonishment, one month's pay in cash and even to supply rations of bread, but there was neither meat, vegetables, wine, nor brandy, even for the hospitals. Soon without pay or food, and always without clothing, the men were as badly off as in the cruel winter of 1794, but now they did not so much desert as break out into insubordination, for it was useless to appeal to their officers, who were as badly off as themselves. Also what Schérer called the legs of the army, the horses and mules, suffered. As he wrote, officers and men, naked and dying of famine, could through patriotism support the most cruel privations, but the animals must be fed if they were to work. 'If the base of an army is its stomach, the first care of the Minister should be directed to this essential part of the administration of the army.' Of course all this told on discipline: for instance, when one grenadier was imprisoned for insubordination, forty-nine of his comrades insisted on sharing his fate; and soon, when Bonaparte joined, he was to report that the army was not only destitute of everything, but was without discipline and in perpetual insubordination. Even 'patriotism' had suffered: Royalism had showed itself, a 'compagnie du Dauphin' had been formed, and two officers had to be tried by court-martial for having cried, 'Vive le roi!' The strain told on the temper of the Generals; we shall find Sérurier trying to leave the army on account of a quarrel with Schérer; Masséna, tenacious but calm-minded, had to deal leniently with most insubordinate replies from his Brigadier, Cervoni, and the hotter Augereau fell on Victor. Already Victor had given trouble to Masséna, when under that General, by going beyond his province as Brigadier, and now his carelessness had to be rebuked by Augereau. On the 23rd December he had to be directed to live in Albenga, the centre of his brigade, and to visit his men frequently, in order to stop the many complaints of their conduct which Augereau declared he received daily, and which brought down on him the displeasure of Schérer. Then, at the end of December, when all



leave of absence had been stopped by the express orders of the government, Schérer found that Victor had given leave to two Lieutenants. Augereau accordingly went to see his Brigadier, who declared he had never received the order, but, as the other brigades acknowledged they had it, Augereau told Schérer that he was not duped, but that, though he did not like 'les hommes de mauvaise foi', he would leave the matter for the time. Next, on the 1st January 1796 Schérer wrote to Augereau that he had found a second leave given by Victor. Augereau now wrote furiously to Victor, telling him that the rule requiring the signature of the General of Division to such leaves must have been known to him, because it was in force in the Armée des Pyrénées Orientales when they both served there. 'I assure you, General, that I have never received so many complaints of my division as I have lately, and they all concern you. I request, General, you will conform to the orders you receive, so that similar complaints may no longer reach me, for I shall know how to remedy them.' To Schérer Augereau wrote that he was trying to find out whether Victor had received the order: if so, he would put him in arrest as by Schérer's orders, and so report. Then, when Schérer released him as having purged the offence of disobedience, he himself would put him in arrest for having imposed on him. 'Ça ira, or the devil take it: we Republicans must have only men of good faith!' However, the erring General seems to have got off with the reprimand. But all this was not a cheerful state of affairs to exist in an army which the Government was longing to see thrust into Italy. Much, of course, depended on the Generals of Division, and Augereau worked at his troops with good effect. In January 1796 he held a formal inspection of his regiments and reported that, 'General Victor has taken the bit in his teeth, and is going like the devil'. Victor had the two regiments, the 8th Light and the 18th Regiment, which were not on a level with the others in efficiency: Lieut.-Colonel Suchet of the 18th had already incurred the displeasure of Augereau for being late in sending in the returns of his battalion's deficiencies in stores. However, after the most minute inspection, Augereau was able to assure Schérer that the division had made good progress, and requested him to write to the two Generals of Brigade, Banel and Victor, to express his satisfaction at the good appearance and discipline which they

were maintaining in their brigades. This Schérer accordingly did on the 28th January.

It is important to study in M. Fabry's work the state of the Armée d'Italie in the pause between its victory at Loano and its advance under Bonaparte, for thus alone can we measure the great responsibility that the young General undertook. Misery is the only word for the condition of the troops; and their almost ludicrous destitution is shown by Masséna's report of the 28th December in which he stated that his regiments would soon have no drums, as they had no money to buy sheepskins and cords with which to repair damages. Augereau had to tell a General of Brigade that he had no idea where Colonels could get either pens or paper, although he promised instead an order for some brandy for an outpost. And orders were not carried out, because the companies had no books in which to copy them. Augereau also had to have Lieut.-Colonel Suchet informed that certain supplies could not be used by officers, who were entitled to draw them from store on payment. But how were the officers to pay? 'You know their poverty,' Masséna told Schérer, 'it is fearful.' Imagine the indignation of the troops, who got no pay, when they found that the *Corps Législatif* had solemnly thanked them for abandoning part of the sums due to them, as a sacrifice for the country. Schérer in reality had only offered in their name to treat part of the arrears as payment for supplies which they hoped would then be issued at once, but the Generals found it difficult to calm the men. Augereau wrote very sensibly on the necessity for letting food and wine arrive before the announcement of the 'gift' was made public; while Masséna did his best to put the matter to his men in the most acceptable way.

In January 1796 the strength of 'Italie' was on paper 100,000, of which some 60,000 only were present under arms, and the four divisions really available, the two of Masséna and those of Augereau and of Sérurier, had but 30,000.<sup>1</sup> One great advance in the organization of the army was made by the practical completion of the *amalgame* or embrigadement of the battalions into fewer and stronger regiments, styled *demi-brigades*. Here there were 63 regiments already formed, of 3 battalions each, besides 19 battalions not yet amalgamated; and these were

<sup>1</sup> Krebs-Moris, *Alpes*, ii. 358-9.

reduced to 20 regiments of 3 battalions each: say 60 battalions instead of 208. Consequent on this reduction of cadres two-thirds of the officers, *sous-officiers*, and corporals were to be sent to their homes or to be formed into auxiliary companies, which were to supply vacancies.<sup>1</sup> Amongst those who suffered from this reduction was Colonel Lannes, whose regiment, the 105th, was amalgamated with the 99th as the 51st Regiment, and, the Colonel of the late 99th being senior, Lannes was placed *en suite*, or seconded, the position in which Bonaparte was to find him.<sup>2</sup> The case of Lieut.-Colonel Suchet's volunteer battalion, the 4th Ardèche, gives a good idea of the reduction of cadres, for on 17th March 1796 it, with two other such battalions, formed the 211th Regiment, and this in a second formation was joined to other corps to build up the 18th Regiment, composed of what had been two battalions of regulars, and 14 volunteer battalions.<sup>3</sup> Rondeau was the Colonel,<sup>4</sup> and Suchet as a Lieut.-Colonel had a battalion. As the regiment became well known, it is easy to follow Suchet's career after this.

Meantime Kellermann with the Armée des Alpes had rendered valuable service by constantly harassing the enemy, especially in front of his right wing, in order to prevent them detaching troops to the support of the forces opposed to Schérer. This work was done by a series of skirmishes too insignificant to detail here, but far from useless. Heavy snow fell a week before Schérer's final advance and hindered any direct operations of the troops of the 'Alpes' in support of 'Italie', but Kellermann kept his men on the summit of the passes until Schérer informed him of the success achieved and thanked him for his assistance; it was only then that the 'Alpes' took up its winter quarters. It was about 18,000 strong, a mere division, in great destitution, and spread over a long line, with part of its force at Lyons. Schérer's success at Loano, bringing 'Italie' close to Genoa and to the district where the hills were lowest, made it nearly certain that the next advance would be made from near the French right, at the point farthest from Kellermann, but the position

<sup>1</sup> Krebs-Moris, *Alpes*, ii. 358, note 2.

<sup>2</sup> Thoumas, Lannes, 16. Susane, *Infanterie française*, i. 372, 406.

<sup>3</sup> Susane, *Infanterie française*, i. 323, 388, 401; Pelleport, i. 35.

<sup>4</sup> He was killed at Cosseria 13th April 1796 and was succeeded, I think, by Fougères, Pelleport, i. 40, 55.



of 'Alpes', always closer to Turin than that of 'Italie', may have made him hope that some stroke might yet be open to him. He had some reason for complaining of Schérer. He had exposed his men to great hardships by keeping them on the icy summits till Schérer had delivered his blow, but his colleague for long left him uninformed of his success. Loano was won on the 24th November, and on the 11th December Kellermann had not heard of it. Eventually the news came through one of the Generals of 'Italie', and Schérer, who professed to have written on the 28th November, threw the blame on Gauthier, his Chief of the Staff.

As for Berthier, he had, in his correspondence with Clarke in Paris, praised all Kellermann's operations as generalissimo of 'Alpes' and 'Italie', but now, as soon as he knew of the success of 'Italie' at Loano, he explained to Clarke what advantages he himself would have reaped from the battle, according to 'my' plan. His remarks are worth giving. 'When very inferior forces are on the defensive, nothing should be hazarded: a single mistake may entail irreparable losses. But when on the offensive, with a superiority that has obtained a brilliant victory, the risk of bold strokes should be taken, for they procure incalculable advantages and, if they do not succeed completely, they still add to the demoralization of the enemy and leave you in the same position as before. If I had been fortunate enough to be with the expedition' (as he had intended to be), 'I acknowledge that I should have insisted on profiting by the rout to throw myself on the entrenched camp of Ceva, while a corps would have pursued the flying wreck of De Wins, which could not rally till behind Alessandria. I know the army is in need of transport; but it has food, and it is at such an instant that a skilful General should display great resources of genius and talent. In making a decision of this sort, the choice of the moment is everything, for you multiply difficulties if you leave the enemy time to rally.' This, I presume, was written to Clarke. Berthier was soon to be under a commander who wanted no insistence on his part to spur him on, but on the other hand he may in the future have taken to heart the sudden checks which he was to see received now and again in the rapid pursuit of an enemy. Now his regret for his detention with 'Alpas' was increased by learning that permission had apparently been

given for his transfer to 'Italie', although it had not been communicated to him. With gentle craft he had tried to get to Paris by suggesting that it would be well to call both Kellermann and Schérer to the capital: 'I think I also can give some details that may be required,' he wrote; and he urged Clarke to support his proposal. The lively Thiébault makes Berthier actually present in Paris with Bonaparte, but on the 2nd December he started on a visit to the cantonments of 'Alpes'. His attitude towards Kellermann has a certain ludicrous resemblance to that of a dog, forced to follow one master, but from the end of his chain looking back longingly at a more favoured one.

Schérer certainly wanted him. At first he had been prepared for a campaign in which a column of 23,000 men was to advance by the Colle di Tenda, and another of 20,000 was to move down the Tanaro and the Western Bormida, supported by 15,000 men marching from Savona by Altare for the Eastern Bormida. But he was alarmed by an order from the Directory to occupy Voltri and the Genoese fortress of Gavi, an operation which would extend his right very far. The strain caused by the fearful state of distress of his army became too much for him: he required help, he could not go round his army with sufficient speed, and in January 1796 he asked for a General of Division to support him and to replace him on occasions. Berthier seemed to him very fit for this post, owing to his knowledge of the country and his military talent: he even preferred him to Masséna, who besides at that time was ill. He would give Berthier the command of the reserve of the army, and, Schérer went on to say (no doubt foreseeing the opposition of Kellermann to his proposal) Berthier could be far more useful with 'Italie' than with 'Alpes'.

The Directors did not agree, but it is possible that they went so far as to offer the post of Chief of the Staff of 'Italie' to Bonaparte. Every effort, however, was made to encourage Schérer. A Commissioner Salicetti was sent to assist him, and the Minister of War advised him not to be discouraged, but to inform him what arrangements he was making to begin operations. All this had no effect on the General, and on the 4th February he wrote that all he could do would be to collect 19,000 to 20,000 infantry and to tell them to march: their bayonets and their courage would be all that they could take

with them. As for himself, he asked that a General with more resources and more skill than he possessed should be sent to replace him. His health was injured, and his moral and physical forces were insufficient for the task required of him. He was fifty, an age which to him then seemed great. (Indeed, I always read with pleasure a certain work in which it is said of the hero that 'although past twenty-five, his eye still retained something of its pristine brightness and his step something of its former vigour'!) If during the war, Schérer went on, he had rendered some services to the Republic, he claimed liberty to retire to his farm, where, in honourable poverty, he would teach his children to adore the Republic. It would have been well for him and for France had he restricted himself in the future to this cheerful work, and had not returned in 1799 to take a command for which he now thought himself incapable. He sent General Lasalcette to Paris to explain the situation more fully, but even then it was not until the Directors had received a letter from Salicetti, dated the 22nd February, that they became convinced that nothing more could be expected from Schérer, and that, being unable to make the additions to his force which he had asked for, they had to replace him by a General who would accept the situation. They had one ready to their hand. For long Bonaparte had been besieging them with plans for the advance of 'Italie': by the 28th February he knew he was to succeed Schérer, and on the 2nd March his nomination was signed. On the 29th March Schérer announced it to the army, at the same time paying a well-deserved tribute to the bravery, patience, and heroic constancy, even to the obedience, which the troops had displayed. He continued to act in good faith to his successor and, though he disliked the plan for marching on Gavi, he collected 9,000 men at Savona for the operation, under the belief that Bonaparte approved the plan. On the 26th March, General Pijon with a force of 3,000 men occupied Voltri. Leaving Paris on the 11th March and halting at Marseilles to see his family, Bonaparte was at Toulon on the 24th, and on the 27th March he took over the command of the Armée d'Italie from Schérer.

I enter into all these details of Schérer's resignation, because they form a good instance of the way in which commanders sometimes quail before the question of supplies, and because



they prove how much courage is often required from a General in dealing with matters which in one sense are neither strategy nor tactics. The tradition may well be true that makes Schérer, in a moment of irritation at being called on to advance, exclaim that the man who had prepared such plans should come and carry them out. But it was not the mere plan that alarmed him. In the fighting sense he was ready enough to advance and he had no dread of a battle: indeed at Loano he had engaged in such a manner that, had Masséna instead of d'Argenteau been routed, the wing which he himself accompanied would have had some difficulty in extricating itself from its position. But he shrank from sending the streams of starving, insubordinate, soldiers through the passes where he could not supply them. He had seen plenty of fighting even when with the 'Sambre-et-Meuse', but here the want of food, clothing, ammunition, boots, transport, in a word of everything, broke him down. Not to understand this is not to appreciate the courage of Bonaparte when he launched that same army through the region of famine into the land of plenty. 'Let the man that drew up the plans come and carry them out!' The man that had drawn up the plans had come to carry them out.

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